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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

VOL. III.

Marchant, Printer, Ingram-Court.

THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

WITH

REMARKS ON EACH PLAY,

AND

AN ESSAY

ON THE

LIFE, GENIUS AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR.

46615

BY JON BEE, ESQ.

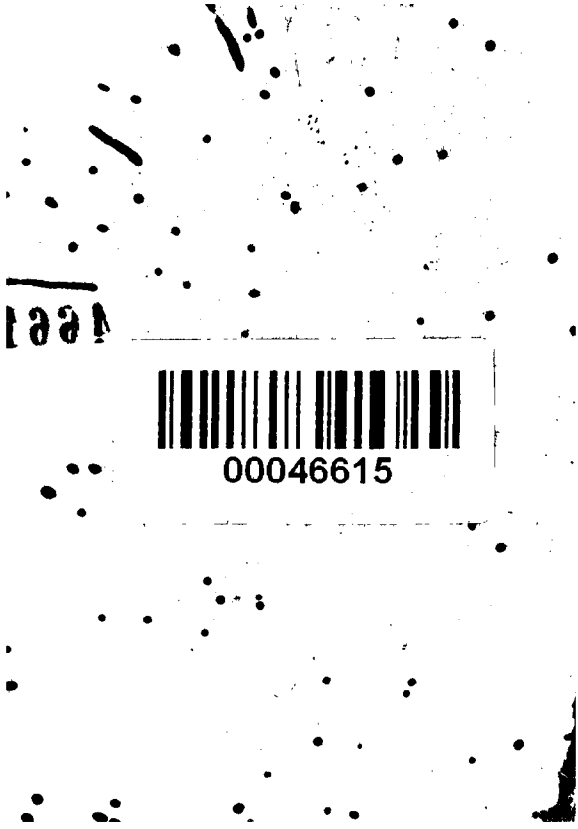
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

THE DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS.
THE LAME LOVER.
THE MAID OF BATH.
THE NABOB.
THE BANKRUPT.
THE COZENERS.
A TRIP TO CALAIS.
THE CAPUCHIN.

LONDON:
SHERWOOD, GILBERT, AND PIPER,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.
1830.


1961
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THE

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS,

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

REMARKS.

NEVER was success more complete than attended the representation of this most excellent comedy, in 1763; so never was the pen of the satiric muse more usefully directed to the repression of a gross public nuisance. It ran through the season, and, at the end of it, Foote found himself upwards of three thousand pounds in pocket by the production.

The machinery of the plot, an invisible demon, was borrowed from Le Sage's *Diable Boiteux*, but the political sarcasm in which he indulges, the biting satiric allusions at the practice of physic in particular, and the assumptions of ignorant pretenders to science and letters, are finely and broadly repressed. One good effect was produced by it, and felt almost immediately: the number of unskilful quacks were considerably reduced, and they were either driven to practise other callings, or to lower their tone and dismiss part of their equipages. The quacks of the present day mostly shine in advertisements of ready-prepared nostrums; whilst scarcely one in ten of the *regulars* can write a prescription without the aid of Dr. Hooper's *Physician's Vade Mecum!*

Like some of his other pieces, the part of "Dr. Last's examination before the College of Physicians" has been frequently *cut down* to an interlude of one act, and even in this mutilated state is always well received, as is the entire piece, whenever it re-appears on the boards tolerably represented.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DEVIL,		*Mr. Foote.*
SIR THOMAS MAXWELL,		*Mr. Gardner.*
INVOICE,		*Mr. Du-Bellamy.*
SLIGO,	Doctors.	*Mr. Moody.*
BROADBRIM,	Doctors.	*Mr. Thompson.*
OASASAFRAS,	Doctors.	*Mr. Egan.*
FINGERFEE,	Doctors.	*Mr. Hutton.*
CAMPHIRE,	Doctors.	*Mr. Fearon.*
CALOMEL,	Doctors.	*Mr. Lings.*
DIACHYLON,	Doctors.	*Mr. Lewis.*
HABAKKUK,	Doctors.	*Mr. Pierce.*
DR. LAST,		*Mr. Weston.*
JOHNNY MACPHERSON,		*Mr. Hamilton.*
JULEP,		*Mr. Palmer.*
APOZEM,		*Mr. Castle.*
FORCEPS,		*Mr. Stevens.*
SECRETARY,		*Mr. Loyd.*
PRINTER'S DEVIL,		*Mr. Jacobs.*
MARGARET,		*Mrs. Gardner.*
HARRIET,		*Mrs. Jewell.*

Servants, &c.

SCENE—Madrid, at first, then London (city.)

THE

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS.

ACT I.

SCENE—A Room.

Enter SIR THOMAS MAXWELL *and* MARGARET.

Sir. Tho. WHY, the woman is mad! these cursed newspaper patriots have shattered her brains! Nothing less than an enator of seven years' standing can conceive what she means.

Marg. Why, Sir Thomas, my conversation is neither deficient in order, precision, or dignity.

Sir Tho. Dignity! and what occasion for dignity in the common concerns of my house? why the deuce can't you converse like the rest of the world? If you want money to pay off my bills, you move me for further supplies; if I turn away a servant, you condemn me for so often changing my ministry; and, because I lock up my daughter, to prevent her eloping with the paltry clerk of a pitiful trader, it is forsooth an invasion of the Bill of Rights, and a mortal slab to the great Charter of Liberty.

Marg. As Sergeant Second'em said in the debate on the Corn-bill, "Then, why don't you choose better ground, brother, and learn to enlarge your bottom a little? Consider you must draw the line of liberty somewhere; for, if these rights belong" ——

Sir Tho. Mercy on us!

Marg. But, indeed, my dear brother, you are got quite out of your depth: woman, I tell you, is a microcosm, and rightly to rule her requires as great talents as to govern a state. And what says the Aphorism of Cardinal Polignac? "If you would not have a person deceive you, be careful not to let him know you mistrust him!" and so of your daughter.

Sir Tho. Mrs. Margaret Maxwell, bestow your advice where it is wanted! Out of my depth? a likely story indeed, that I, who am fixed here in a national trust, appointed guardian of the English interest at the court of Madrid, should not know how to manage a girl!

Marg. And pray, Mr. Consul, what information will your station afford you? I do not deny your knowledge in export and import, nor doubt your skill in the difference between wet and dry goods: you may weigh with exactness the balance of trade, or explain the true spirit of a treaty of commerce; the surface, the mere skimmings of the political world.

Sir Tho. Mighty well!

Marg. But had you, with me, traced things to their original source; had you discovered all social subordination to arise from original compact; had you read Machiavel, Montesquieu, Locke, Bacon, Hobbes, Harrington, Hume; had you studied the political testaments of Alberoni and Cardinal Richelieu——

Sir Tho. Mercy on us!

Marg. Had you analyzed the pragmatic sanction, and the family compact; had you toiled through the laborious pages of the Vinerian Professor, or estimated the prevailing manners with the Vicar of Newcastle; in a word, had you read Amicus upon Taxation, and Inimicus upon Representation, you would have known——

Sir Tho. What?

Marg. That, in spite of the frippery of the French Salique law, woman is a free agent, a noun-substantive entity, and, when treated with confidence——

Sir Tho. Why, perhaps, she may not abuse it; but still, my sage sister, it is but a *perhaps;* now, my method is certain, infallible; by confining her, I cannot be deceived.

Marg. And pray, sir, what right have you to confine her? look in your Puffendorff! Though born in Spain, she is a native of England; her birth-right is liberty—a better patrimonial estate than any of your despotic countries could give her.

Sir Tho. 'Zooks, you would tire the patience of Job! Pray answer me this; is Harriet my daughter?

Marg. What then? for that inestimable blessing she is not beholden to you; nor can you, though a father, with reason, justice, or law, take it from her.

Sir. Tho. Why, Margaret, you forget where you are! This, child; is the town of Madrid; you are amongst a sage, steady people, who know and revere the natural rights of a parent.

Marg. Natural rights! Can a right to tyranize be founded in nature?

Sir Tho. Look'e, Margaret! you are but los-

ing your time; for, unless you can prevail on Count Wall or the President of Castile to grant you a habeas, why Harriet shall stay where she is.

Mar. Ay, ay, you know where you are; but, if my niece will take my advice, the justice that is denied her here, she will instantly seek for elsewhere.

Sir Tho. Elsewhere? Hark you, sister! is it thus you answer my purpose in bringing you hither? I hoped to have my daughter's principles formed by your prudence; her conduct directed by your experience and wisdom.

Marg. The preliminary is categorically true.

Sir Tho. Then, why don't you abide by the treaty?

Marg. Yes; you have given me powerful motives!

Sir Tho. But another word, madam! as I do not choose that Harriet should imbibe any more of your romantic republican notions, I shall take it as a great favour if you would prepare to quit this country with the first opportunity.

Marg. You need not have remonstrated; a petition would have answered your purpose: I did intend to withdraw, and without taking leave; nor will I reside on a spot where the great charter of my sex is hourly invaded! No, Sir Thomas, I shall return to the land of liberty! but there expect to have your despotic dealings properly and publicly handled.

Sir Tho. What, you design to turn author?

Marg. There's no occasion for that; liberty has already a champion in one of my sex. The same pen that has dared to scourge the arbitrary actions of some of our monarchs, shall do equal justice to the oppressive power of parents!

Sir Tho. With all my heart.

Marg. I may, perhaps, be too late to get you into the historical text; but, I promise you, you shall be soundly swinged in the marginal notes.

Enter a SERVANT, *who whispers* SIR THOMAS.

Sir Tho. What! now?

Serv. This instant.

Sir Tho. How did he get in?

Serv. By a ladder of ropes, dropped, I suppose, by Miss Harriet, from the balcony.

Sir Tho. That way, I reckon, he thinks to retreat; but I shall prevent him! Here, Dick, do you and Ralph run into the street, and front the house with a couple of carbines; bid James bring my toledo; and let the rest of the fellows follow my steps!

Marg. Hey-day! what can be the meaning of this civil commotion?

Sir Tho. Nothing extraordinary; only the natural consequence of some of your salutary suggestions.

Marg. Mine, Sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. Yes, yours, sister Margaret!

Marg. I don't understand you.

Sir Tho. Oh, nothing but Harriet making use of her great charter of natural liberty, by letting young Invoice, Abraham Indigo's clerk, by the means of a ladder of ropes, into her chamber.

Marg. I am not surprised.

Sir Tho. Nor I neither.

Marg. The instant your suspicions gave her a guard, I told her the act was tantamount to an open declaration of war, and sanctified every stratagem.

Sir Tho. You did? mighty well, madam! I hope, then, for once, you will approve my pro-

ceedings; the law of nations shall be strictly observed; you shall see how a spy ought to be treated who is caught in the enemy's camp!

Enter SERVANT *with the Toledo.*

Oh, here's my trusty toledo. Come, follow your leader! [*Exit with Servants.*

Marg. Oh, sir, I shall pursue, and reconnoitre your motions; and though no cartel is settled between you, take care how you infringe the *jus gentium.* [*Exit* MARG.

Another Chamber. HARRIET *and* INVOICE *discovered.*

Har. Are you sure you were not observed?

Inv. I believe not.

Har. Well, Mr. Invoice, you can, I think, now no longer doubt of my kindness; though, let me tell you, you are a good deal indebted for this early proof of it, to my father's severity.

Inv. I am sorry, madam, an event, so happy for me, should proceed from so unlucky a cause: But are there no hopes that Sir Thomas may be softened in time?

Har. None: he is, both from nature and habit, inflexibly obstinate. This, too, is his favourite foible; no German baron was ever more attached to the genealogical laws of alliance than he: Marry his daughter to a person in trade? no! Put his present favourite out of the question, he can never be brought to submit to it.

Inv. Dear Miss Harriet, then why will you hesitate? there can be no other alternative; you must either submit to marry the count, or by flight escape from the——

Har. No, Mr. Invoice, not till the last neces-

sity drives me. Besides, where can we go? how subsist? who will receive us?

Inv. The world is all before us where to choose; and, as we fly from oppression, *Providence be our guide.*

Har. The world, Mr. Invoice, is but a cold kind of common; and, as to Providence, let us first be sure we deserve its protection.——[*A noise without.*] Bless me! don't I hear some bustle below?

Inv. Madam!

Har. Hush! my father, as I live! I fear, Mr. Invoice, you are discovered.

Inv. No, surely!

Sir Tho. [*without.*] Have you secured all the posts?

Serv. [*without.*] All, sir.

Sir Tho. Both in the front and the rear?

Serv. Both.

Har. Lost, past redemption!

Sir Tho. Then advance! now let us unharbour the rascal!

Har. What can we do?

Sir Tho. Come, madam, open your doors!

Har. The balcony, quick, Mr. Invoice, the balcony!

Sir Tho. Unlock, Mrs. Minx! your minion is discovered!

Inv. A couple of fellows stand below, with their pieces pointed directly against it.

Sir Tho. What, then, you will compel us to batter?

Har. The whole house is surrounded! how can you escape?

Inv. Where will this window conduct us?

Har. To the leads that join our house to the chymist's.

Inv. To the leads? it is but a step; there is no danger.

Har. Then instantly fly! you have every thing to fear from my father.

Sir Tho. John, fetch the mattock and crow!

Inv. And leave my Harriet behind me?

Har. Secure yourself, and abandon me to my fate.

Inv. No, madam, that I will never do; I'll dare your father's utmost resentment.

Sir Tho. Where is that rascal a-loitering?

Har. Then you are lost?

Inv. Would my Harriet accompany my flight—

Har. Can you desire it?

Inv. I do, I do; my dearest angel, I do! By all that's sacred, your honour shall be as secure with me as in the cell of a saint!

Har. But character, decency, prudence——

Inv. The occasion, the danger, all justify——

Sir Tho. Oh, what, you are come at last.

Inv. Determine, my life! You have but a moment——

Har. Should you, Mr. Invoice, deceive me—

Inv. When I do, may my last hope deceive me!

Har. It is a bold, a dangerous step!

Inv. Fear nothing, my love!

[*Advances to the window, and gets out.*

Sir Tho. Drive at the pannel.

Marg. [*without.*] I enter my protest!

Sir Tho. And I will enter the room!

Inv. Now leap; all is safe.

[HARRIET *gets out at the window.*

Sir Thomas, adieu!

Sir Tho. Wrench open the lock!

Marg. Ay, do, at your peril!

Sir Tho. Down with the door!

Marg. Then you shall all be swingeingly soused. Produce your authority!

Sir Tho. Mine!

Marg. You have none; not so much as the sanction of a *general warrant.*

Sir Tho. What, then, I see I must do it myself; there it goes! Pretty law, indeed, to lock a man out of his own house!

Enter SIR THOMAS, MARGARET, *and Servants.*

Now, Mrs.—— Heyday! what are become of the parties? vanished?

Marg. Deceived by your spies! no uncommon thing, brother, for a blundering general.

Sir Tho. You are sure you saw him come in?

Serv. Certain, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Then I warrant we will ferret them out. Come, lads! let not a corner escape you!

[*Exeunt* SIR THOMAS *and Servants.*

Marg. I shall wait on your motions, and bring up the rear. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to the Chymist's.

Enter INVOICE and HARRIET *through the Sash.*

Inv. Safely landed, however.

Har. Are you sure you are not pursued?

Inv. Not a soul: never fear! they will hardly venture this road.

Har. What a step have you induced me to take! to what distress and difficulties have I exposed myself!

Inv. Banish your fears, and let us look forward, my love.

Har. Nay, I have gone too far to retreat. Well, sir, what is next to be done?

Inv. The Spaniards are naturally generous; perhaps, upon hearing our story, the owner of the house may lend his assistance. This, I suppose, is the laboratory, and this door leads to the shop.

Devil. [*in a bottle.*] Heigh-ho!

Har. Who is that?

Inv. That! where?

Har. Did not you hear a voice?

Inv. None. Fancy, my love; only your fears.

Devil. Heigh-ho!

Har. There again!

Inv. I hear it now.—Who is there?

Devil. Me.

Inv. Me? he speaks English! Who and where are you?

Devil. Here in this bottle; where I have been corked up for these six months.

Inv. Corked up in a bottle! I never heard of such a thing in my life, unless, indeed, in the Haymarket once.—Corked up in a bottle, d'ye say?

Devil. Ay; by the master of this house, a magician.

Inv. A magician! Why, then, you are a spirit, I suppose.

Devil. You are right; I am the Devil.

Har. Mercy on us!

Devil. Don't be terrified, miss: you remember the old proverb, "The Devil is not so black as he is painted."

Inv. Well, but, sir——

Devil. A truce to your questions, my good sir, for the present!—Consider, rammed up in this narrow compass, I can't be much at my ease;

now, if you will but break the bottle before you on the floor——

Har. For heaven's sake, Mr. Invoice, take care what you do!

Devil. Why, my pretty miss, what risk do you run? your affairs can hardly be changed for the worse.

Har. That's true, indeed!

Devil. Believe me, miss, as matters stand, we can be of mutual use: your lover may deliver me from prison, and I can prevent you both from going into confinement.

Inv. What says my Harriet? shall I rely on the gentleman's word?

Devil. Do, madam! I am a Devil of honour. Besides, you have but a little time to consider; in less than five minutes, you will have the Consul and all his crew in the house.

Inv. Nay, then—Pray which is the bottle?

Devil. That in the middle, right before you.

Inv. There it goes!

[*He breaks the bottle, and* DEVIL *rises out of it. Thunder.*

Har. Oh, what a——

Devil. I am not surprised, miss, that you are a little shocked at my figure: I could have assumed a much more agreeable form; but as we are to be a little better acquainted, I thought it best to quit all disguise and pretence; therefore, madam, you see me just as I am.

Har. I am sure, sir, you are ve—ve—very agreeable.

Devil. Yo—yo—you are pleased to compliment, madam.—Come, answer me sincerely; am I such a being as you expected to see?

Har. Really, sir, I can hardly say what I expected to see.

Devil. I own it is a puzzling question; at least, if the world does us justice in the contradictory qualities they are pleased to afford us.

Inv. You will forgive me if I do not understand you.

Devil. Why, for all their superlative epithets, you cannot but see how much men are beholden to us; by our means it is that you measure the extent of both of your virtues and vices.

Inv. As how?

Devil. As thus: In describing your friends, or your foes, they are *devilish* rich, *devilish* poor, *devilish* ugly, *devilish* handsome; now and then, indeed, to vary the mode of conversing, you make a little free with our condition and country, as *hellish* dull, *damn'd* clever, *hellish* cold; psha! how *damn'd* hot it is.

Inv. True, sir; but I consider this as a rhetorical figure, a manner of speaking devised, and practised by dulness, to conceal the lack of ideas, and the want of expressions.

Devil. Partly that, I confess: not but there is some truth in the case; for at different times we have the power, and do assume the various forms you assign us.

Inv. We? I observe you always make use of the plural; is that, sir, by way of distinction, or is your family pretty large and extensive?

Devil. Multitudinous as the sands on the beach, or the moats in a sun-beam: how the deuce else do you think we could do all the business below? Why, there's scarcely an individual amongst you, at least of any rank or importance, but has five or six of us in his train.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. A little before I got rammed up, that

phial, I had been for some time on very hard duty in this part of the world.

Inv. Of what kind?

Devil. The Demon of Power and I had long laid siege to a subject; the man a grandee; I was then a popular spirit, and wore the mask of a patriot: at different times, we possessed him by turns; but, in the midst of a violent struggle (by which means I got lame on this leg, and obtained the nick-name of the Devil Upon Sticks), the Demon of Vanity, a low under-strapper amongst us, held over his head a circle of gold, with five knobs on the top, and, *whew!* flew away with our prize in an instant.

Inv. Under-strapper! what, are there different ranks and orders amongst you?

Devil. Without doubt.

Inv. And, pray, sir—I hope, no offence, but I would not be wanting in proper respect—are you, when at home, of condition? or how must I——

Devil. You mean, am I a devil of fashion, or one of the base born?

Inv. I do.

Devil. I have no reason to be ashamed of my family.

Inv. I do not doubt it. You will forgive me, if I make a mistake: Perhaps, my lord Lucifer.

Devil. Who?

Inv. Lord Lucifer.

Devil. *Lord* Lucifer? how little you know of our folks! Lucifer a *lord!* Why, that's the meanest rascal amongst us.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. Oh, a paltry mechanic! the very genius of jobbing! a mere Bull and Bear booby; the

patron of lame ducks, brokers, and fraudulent bankrupts.

Inv. You amaze me! I vow I always thought him a principal agent.

Devil. He! Not at all. The fellow, indeed, gave himself some airs of importance upon following the camp, and having the contractors and commissaries under his care; but that affair, you know, closed with the war.

Inv. What, then, are they now entirely out of his hands?

Devil. Yes; quite out of his: he only suggested their *cent. per cent.* squeezings, and prompted the various modes of extortion and rapine: but, in his room, they have six or seven demons a-piece, to direct the dissipation of their ill-gotten wealth.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. Poor Lucifer, it is all over with him! if it were not for the fluctuations of India, an occasional lottery, or a contested election, the Alley would be empty, and Lucifer have as little to do as a pickpocket when the playhouses are shut.

Inv. Perhaps, sir, then your name may be Belzebub?

Devil. He? worse and worse! Not a devil that has the least regard to his character would choose to be seen in his company: Besides, it is the most petulant, waspish, quarrelsome cur—But no wonder; he is the imp of chicane, and protects the rotten part of the law.

Inv. Then he, at least, has employment enough.

Devil. Yes, during the term, he has a good deal to do: he is the parent of quibbles, the guardian of pettifoggers, bad bail, and of bailiffs; the supporter

of *alibis*, the source of sham pleas, the maker and finder of flaws, the patron of perjury, and a sworn foe to all trial by jury! Not long ago, though, my gentleman was put to his shifts.

Inv. How was that?

Devil. The law had laid hold of an old friend of his, for being too positive as to a matter of fact; evidence, evasion, protraction, pleas, every art, was employed to acquit him, that the most consummate skill could suggest; but all to no purpose.

Inv. That was strange.

Devil. Beyond all belief; he could have hanged a dozen innocent people, with half the pains that this paltry perjury gave him.

Inv. How came that about?

Devil. Why—I don't know—he had unfortunately to do with an obstinate magistrate, who bears a mortal hatred to rogues, and whose sagacity could not be deceived. But, however, though he was not able to save his friend from the shame of conviction (a trifle, which he indeed but little regarded), yet he had the address to evade, or at least defer, the time of his punishment.

Inv. By what means?

Devil. By finding a flaw.

Inv. A flaw! what's a flaw?

Devil. A legal loop-hole, that the lawyers leave open for a rogue now and then to creep through, that the game may not be wholly destroyed.

Inv. Provident sportsmen! Would it not be too much trouble to favour me with this particular instance?

Devil. Not at all. Why, sir, when matters grew desperate, and the case was given over for lost, little Belzy starts up in the form of an able prac-

titioner, and humbly conceived, that his client could not be convicted upon that indictment; forasmuch as therein he was charged with forswearing himself NOW; whereas it clearly appeared, by the evidence, that he had only forsworn himself THEN: if, indeed, he had been indicted generally, for committing *now* and *then*, proofs might be produced of any perjury he may have committed; whereas, by limiting the point of time to the *now*, no proofs could be admitted as to the *then*: so that, with submission, he humbly conceived, his client was clearly absolved, and his character as fair and as spotless as a babe that's just born, and immaculate as a sheet of white paper.

Inv. And the objection was good?

Devil. Fatal; there was no getting rid of the flaw.

Inv. And the gentleman——

Devil. Walks about at his ease; not a public place, but he thrusts his person full in your face.

Inv. That ought not to be; the contempt of the public, that necessary supplement to the best-digested body of laws, should in these cases be never dispensed with.

Devil. In days of yore, when the world was but young, that method had merit, and the sense of shame was a kind of curb; but knaves are now so numerous and wealthy, they can keep one another in countenance, and laugh at the rest of the world.

Inv. There may be something in that.—Well, sir, I have twice been out of my guess; will you give me leave to hazard a third? Perhaps you are Belphegor, or Uriel?

Devil. Neither. They, too, are but diminutive devils: the first favours the petty, pilfering frauds;

he may be traced in the double score and soaped pot of the publican, the alum and chalk of the baker, in the sophisticated mixtures of the brewer of wine and of beer, and in the false measures and weights of them all.

Inv. And Uriel?

Devil. He is the demon of quacks and of mountebanks; a thriving race all over the world, but their true seat of empire is England. There, a short sword, a tie, and a nostrum, a month's advertising with a shower of handbills, never fail of creating a fortune. But of this tribe I foresee I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

Inv. Well, but, sir——

Devil. Come, sir, I will put an end to your pain; for, from my appearance, it is impossible you should ever guess at my person.—Now, Miss, what think you of Cupid?

Har. You! you Cupid! you the gay god of love!

Devil. Yes; me, me, Miss!—What, I suppose you expected the quiver at my back, and the bow in my hand; the purple pinions, and the filletted forehead, with the blooming graces of youth and beauty.

Har. Why, I can't but say the poets had taught me to expect charms——

Devil. That never existed but in the fire of their fancy; all fiction and phrenzy!

Inv. Then, perhaps, sir, these creative gentlemen may err as much in your office, as it is clear they have mistaken your person.

Devil. Why, their notions of me are but narrow. It is true, I do a little business in the amorous way; but my dealings are of a different kind to those they describe. My province lies in forming

conjunctions absurd and preposterous. It is I that couple boys and beldames, girls and greybeards, together; and when you see a man of fashion locked in legitimate wedlock with the stale leavings of half the fellows in town, or a lady of fortune setting out for Edinburgh in a post-chaise with her footman, you may always set it down as some of my handy work. But this is but [*only*] an inconsiderable branch of my business.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. The several arts of the drama, dancing, music, and painting, owe their existence to me: I am the father of fashions, the inventor of *quints, trente, quarante,* and hazard; the guardian of gamesters, the genius of gluttony, and the author, protector, and patron of licentiousness, lewdness, and luxury.

Inv. Your department is large.

Devil. One time or other I may give you a more minute account of these matters; at present we have not a moment to lose: should my tyrant return, I must expect to be again corked up in a bottle. [*Knocking.*] And hark! it is the consul that knocks at the door; therefore be quick! how can I serve you?

Inv. You are no stranger, sir, to our distress. Here, we are unprotected and friendless; could your art convey us to the place of our birth——

Devil. To England?

Inv. If you please.

Devil. Without danger, and with great expedition. Come to this window, and lay hold of my cloak. I have often resided in England: at present, indeed, there are but few of our family there; every seventh year we have a general dispensation for residence; for at that time the inhabitants

themselves can play *the devil* without our aid or assistance. Off we go! stick fast to your hold!

[*Thunder. Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE.—A Street in London.

Enter DEVIL, INVOICE, *and* HARRIET.

Devil. Well, my good friends, I hope you are not displeased with your journey?

Inv. We had no time to be tired.

Har. No vehicle was ever so easy.

Devil. Then, by you mortals what injustice is done us, when every crazy, creaking, jolting, jumbling coach, is called *a devil of a carriage.*

Inv. Very true.

Devil. Oh, amongst you we are horribly used.—Well, sir, you now see I am a devil of honour, and have punctually obeyed your commands: but I shall not limit my gratitude to a literal compliance with our compact; is there any thing else [I can do] for your service?

Inv. Were I not afraid to trespass too much on your time——

Devil. A truce to your compliments! Though they are the common *change* of the world, we know of what base metal the coin is composed, and have cried down the currency: speak your wishes at once.

Inv. England, sir, is our country, it is true; but Miss Maxwell's being born abroad, and my leaving

it young, have made us both as much strangers to its manners and customs, as if you had set us down at Ispahan or Delhi: give us, then, some little knowledge of the people with whom we are to live.

Devil. That task, young gentleman, is too much even for the Devil himself! Where liberty reigns, and property is pretty equally spread, independence and pride will give each individual a peculiar and separate character: when classed in professions, indeed, they then wear some singular marks that distinguish them from the rest of their race; these it may be necessary for you to know.

Inv. You will highly oblige me.

Devil. And at the same time that I am showing you persons, I will give you some little light into things. Health and property, you know, are the two important objects of human attention: you shall first see their state and situation in London.

Inv. You mean the practice of physic and law?

Devil. I do. And as to the first, you will find it, in some of the professors, a science, noble, salutary, and liberal; in others, a trade, as mean as it is mercenary; a contemptible combination of dunces, nurses, and apothecaries: but you have now a lucky opportunity of knowing more in an hour of the great improvements in this branch of civil society than, by any other means, seven years could have taught you.

Inv. Explain, if you please.

Devil. The spirit of discord prevails: the republic of tied periwigs, like the Romans of old, have turned their arms from the rest of mankind, to draw their short swords on themselves.

Inv. But how came this about?

Devil. To carry on the metaphor, you must know, in this great town, there are two corps of

these troops, equally numerous and equally formidable. The first, it is true, are disciplined, and fight under a general, whom they christen a president: the second contains the hussars, and pandours of physic; they rarely attack a patient together; not but the latter single-handed can do good execution.

Inv. But their cause of contention?

Devil. Pride. The light troops are jealous of some honours the others possess by prescription, and, though but a militia, think they have a right to an equal rank with the regulars.

Inv. Why, this in time may ruin their state.

Devil. True; but that we must prevent; it is our interest to make up this breach: already we feel the fatal effects of their feuds: by neglecting their patients, the weekly bills daily decline, and new subjects begin to grow scarce in our realms.

Inv. This does, indeed, claim your attention.

Devil. We purpose to call in the aid of the law; bleeding the purse is as effectual for damping the spirit as opening a vein for lowering the pulse. The demon of litigation has already possessed the licentiates; I must infuse the same passion into the president; and I warrant you, in two or three terms, with two or three trials, all sides will be heartily tired. But, a-propos! I see a brace of apothecaries coming this way; they seem deep in debate: let us listen; we shall best learn from them the present posture of—Hush, hide!—You shall here, too, have a proof what a Proteus I am.

[*They retire.*

Enter JULAP *and* APOZEM, *with a Letter.*

Julap. I tell you, Apozem, you are but young

in the business, and don't foresee how much we shall be all hurt in the end.

Apozem. Well, but what can be done, Mr. Julap? Here, Dr. Hellebore writes me word, that they threaten a siege, and are provided with fire-arms: would you have them surrender the college at once?

Julap. Fire-arms? If they are mad enough not to know that the pen is the doctor's best pistol, why, let them proceed!

Apozem. But are we to stand quietly by, and see the very seat of *the science* demolished and torn?

Julap. And with what arms are we to defend it? where are our cannon? We have mortars indeed, but then they are fit to hold nothing but pestles; and, as to our small arms, of what use can they be in a siege? they are made, you know, to attack only the rear.

Apozem. Come, come, Mr. Julap, you make too light of these matters: to have the lawful descendants from Galen, the throne of Esculapius, overturned by a parcel of Göths!

Julap. Peace, Apozem, or treat your betters with proper respect! What, numskull, do you think all physicians are blockheads who have not washed their hands in the *Cam* or the *Isis?*

Apozem. Well, but I hope you will allow that a university-doctor——

Julap. May, for aught you know, be a dunce. Besides, fool, what have we to do with degrees? The doctor that doses best is the best doctor for us. You talk of the college; there are some of their names, I am sure, that I never desire to see on my file.

Apozem. Indeed!

Julap. Indeed! no, indeed. Why, there's Dr. Diet, that makes such a dust: he had a person of fashion, a patient of mine, under his care t'other day; as fine a slow fever! I was in hopes of half making my fortune——

Apozem. Yes; I love a slow fever. Was it nervous?

Julap. Ay, with a lovely dejection of spirits.

Apozem. That was delightful, indeed! I look upon the nerves and the bile to be the two best friends we have to our back. Well, pray, and how did it answer?

Julap. Not at all; the scoundrel let him slip through my hands for a song; only a paltry six pounds and a crown.

Apozem. Shameful!

Julap. Infamous! and yet, forsooth he was one of your college. Well, now to show you the difference in men; but the very week after, Dr. Linctus, from Leyden, run me up a bill of thirty odd pounds, for only attending Alderman Soakpot six days in a surfeit.

Apozem. Ay, that was doing of business.

Julap. Ah! that's a sweet pretty practitioner, Apozem: we must all do our utmost to push him on.

Apozem. Without douht. But, notwithstanding all you say, Mr. Julap, there are some of the gentlemen of the college, that I know——

Julap. Ah! as fine fellows as ever fingered a pulse; not one of the trade will deny it.

Apozem. But, amongst all now, old Nat Nightshade is the man for my money.

Julap. Yes; Nat, Nat has merit, I owns; but, pox take him! he is so devilish quick. To be sure, he has a very pretty fluent pen whilst it lasts; but

then he makes such despatch, that one has hardly time to send in two dozen of draughts.

Apozem. Yes; the doctor drives on, to be sure.

Julap. Drives on! If I am at all free in the house, when old Nightshade is sent for, as a preparatory dose I always recommend an attorney.

Apozem. An attorney? for what?

Julap. To make the patient's will, before he swallows the doctor's prescription.

Apozem. That is prudent.

Julap. Yes; I generally afterwards get the thanks of the family.

Julap. What, Mr. Julap, for the attorney, or the physician? ha, ha!

Apozem. Ha, ha! you are arch, little Apozem; quite a wag, I profess.

Apozem. Why, you know, brother Julap, these are subjects upon which one can hardly be serious.

Julap. True, true; but then you should never laugh loud in the street: we may indulge, indeed, a kind of simpering smile to our patients, as we drive by in our chariots; but then there is a decency, not to say dignity, that becomes the public demeanour of us who belong to the faculty.

Apozem. True. And yet there are times when one can hardly forbear. Why, t'other day, now, I had like to have burst: I was following a funeral into St. George's—a sweet pretty burying; velvet pall, hatband, and gloves; and, indeed, the widow was quite handsome in all things; paid my bill the next week, without sconcing off sixpence, though they were thought to have lived happily together—but, as I was a-saying, as we were entering the church, who should stand in the porch but Kit Cabbage, the tailor, with a new pair of breeches under his arm: the sly rogue made me a bow,

"Servant, master Apozem!" says he; "what, you are carrying home your work too, I see." Did you ever hear such a dog?

Julap. Ay, ay; let them, let them—But, is not that Dr. Squib that is crossing the way?

Apozem. Yes; you may see it is Squib, by his shuffle. What, I suppose now he is scouring away for the college.

Julap. Who? Squib? how little you know of him! he did not care if all our tribe was tipped into the Thames.

Apozem. No.

Julap. No! Lord help you! he is too much taken up with the national illness to attend to particular ails. Why, he would quit the best patient in town, to hunt after a political secret; and would rather have a whisper from a great man in the Court of Requests, than five hundred pounds for attending him in a chronical case.

Apozem. Wonderful!—Who can that dirty boy be that he has in his hand?

Julap. One of his scouts, I suppose.—We shall see.

Re-enter DEVIL, *as* DR. SQUIB, *and* PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Squib. And you are sure this was worked off one of the first?

Boy. Not a single one, sir, has been sent out as yet.

Squib. That is daintily done, my dear devil! Here, child, here's sixpence. When your master gives you the rest, you need not be in haste to deliver them, but step into the first public-house to refresh you.

Boy. I shall, sir.

Squib. By that means, I shall be earliest to treat two or three great men that I know with the sight.

Boy. No further commands, sir?

Squib. None, child.—But, d'ye hear? if you can at any time get me the rough reading of any tart political manuscript, before it goes to press, you shall not be a loser.

Boy. I shall try, sir.

Squib. That's well! Mind your business, and go on but as you have begun, and I foresee your fortune is made. Come, who knows but in a little time, if you are a good boy, you may get yourself committed to Newgate.

Boy. Ah, sir, I am afraid I am too young.

Squib. Not at all: I have seen lads in limbo much younger than you. Come, don't be faint-hearted; there has many a printer been raised to the pillory from as slender beginnings.

Boy. That's great comfort, however. Well, sir, I'll do my endeavour. [*Exit.*

Squib. Do, do!—What, Apozem! Julap! well encountered, my lads! You are a couple of lucky rogues! Here, here's a treat for a prince; such a print, boys! just fresh from the plate: feel it; so wet you may wring it.

Julap. And pray, good doctor, what is the subject?

Squib. Subject? Gad take me, a trimmer! This will make some folks that we know look about them. Hey, Julap, don't you think this will sting?

Julap. I profess I don't understand it.

Squib. No? Why, zounds, it is as plain as a pikestaff; in your own way too, you blockhead! Can't you see? Read, read the title, you rogue!

But, perhaps you can't without spectacles. Let me see; ay, "The State-quacks; or, Britannia a-dying:" You take it?

Julap. Very well.

Squib. There, you see her stretched along on a pallet; you may know she is Britannia by the shield and spear at the head of her bed.

Apozem. Very plain; for all the world like the wrong side of a halfpenny!

Squib. Well said, little Apozem! you have discernment, I see. Her disease is a lethargy; you see how sick she is, by holding her hand to her head; don't you see that?

Julap. I do, I do.

Squib. Well, then, look at that figure there upon her left hand.

Julap. Which?

Squib. Why, he that holds a draught to her mouth.

Julap. What, the man with the phial?

Squib. Ay, he! he with the phial; that is supposed to be—[*whispers*] offering her laudanum, to lull her faster asleep.

Julap. Laudanum! a noble medicine when administered properly: I remember once, in a locked jaw——

Squib. Damn your locked jaw! hold your prating, you puppy! I wish your jaws were locked! Pox take him, I have forgot what I was going to——Apozem, where did I leave off?

Apozem. You left off at faster asleep.

Squib. True; I was faster asleep. Well, then; you see that thin figure there, with the meagre chops; he with the straw in his hand.

Apozem. Very plain.

Squib. He is supposed to be——[*whispers.*] You take me?

Julap. Ay, ay.

Squib. Who rouzes Britannia, by tickling her nose with that straw; she starts, and with a jerk—[*starting, strikes Julap*] I beg pardon!—and with a jerk knocks the bottle of laudanum out of his hand; and so, by that there means, you see Britannia is delivered from death.

Julap. Ay, ay.

Squib. Hey! you swallow the satire? Pretty bitter, I think?

Julap. I can't say that I quite understand—that is—a—a—

Squib. Not understand? then what a fool am I to throw away my time on a dunce! I shall miss, too, the reading a new pamphlet in Red-Lion-Square; and at six I must be at Sergeant's Inn, to justify bail for a couple of journeymen printers.

Apozem. But, Dr. Squib, you seem to have forgot the case of the college, your brethren.

Squib. I have no time to attend their trifling squabbles: the nation, the nation, Mr. Apozem, engrosses my care. The college! could they but get me a styptic to stop the bleeding wounds of my ——it is there, there, that I feel! Oh, Julap, Apozem,

> Could they but cast the water of this land,
> Purge her gross humours, purify her blood,
> And give her back her pristine health again,
> I would applaud them to the very echo
> That should applaud again!

Julap. Indeed, Dr. Squib, that I believe is out of the way of the college.

Squib.

Throw physic to the dogs, then! I'll have none on't.
But tell me, Apozem, inform me, Julap,
What senna, rhuharb, or what purgative drug,
Can scour these——hence?

You understand me, lads!

Julap. In good truth, not I, sir.

Squib. No! then so much the better! I warrant little Pozy does. Well, adieu, my brave boys! for I have not an instant to lose. Not understand me, hey? Apozem, you do, you rogue!—

What senna, rhubarb, or—hey—can scour these sc—

Egad,—I had like to have gone too far!—Well, by, by! [*Exit.* SQUIB.

Julap. Why, the poor man seems out of his senses.

Apozem. When he talked of throwing physic to the dogs, I confess I began to suspect him. But we shall be late; we must attend our summons, you know.

Julap. Throw physic to the dogs! I can tell thee, Apozem, if he does not get cured of these fancies and freaks, he is more likely to go to the kennel by half. Throw physic to the dogs! an impertinent ignorant puppy! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter DEVIL, INVOICE, *and* HARRIET.

Devil. Well, I think chance has thrown a pretty good sample into your way. Now, if I could but get one to conduct you—But stay! who have we here?

Enter LAST, *with a pair of shoes.*

Last. Pray, good gentleman, can you tell a body which is the ready road to find Warwick-lane?

Devil. Warwick-lane, friend? and prithee what can thy errand be there?*

Last. I am going there to take out a license to make me a doctor, an like your worship.

Devil. Where do you live?

Last. A little way off, in the country.

Devil. Your name, honest friend, and your business?

Last. My name, master, is Last; by trade I am a doctor, and by profession a maker of shoes: I was born to the one, and bred up to the other.

Devil. Born? I don't understand you.

Last. Why, I am a seventh son, and so were my father.

Devil. Oh! a very clear title. And pray, now, in what branch does your skill chiefly lie?

Last. By casting a water, I cures the jaundarse; I taps folks for a *tenpenny;* and have a choice charm for the *agar;* and, over and above that, master, I bleeds.

Devil. Bleeds? and are your neighbours so bold as to trust you?

Last. Trust me? ay, master, that they will, sooner than narra a man in the country. Mayhap you may know Dr. Tith'em, our rector at home.

Devil. I can't say that I do.

Last. He's the flower of a man in the pulpit. Why, t'other day, you must know, taking a turn in his garden, and thinking of nothing at all, down falls the doctor flat in a fit of *perplexity;* Madam Tith'em, believing her husband was dead, directly sent the sexton for I.

* *Warwick-lane.*] This delectable spot ceased to be the residence of *the science* in 1825; fashion and a fine house drew the college *Westward,* in despite of the practice of the ancients, who went Eastward in search of knowledge.

Devil. An affectionate wife!

Last. Yes; they are a main happy couple. Sure as a gun, master, when I comed, his face was as black as his cassock: but, howsomdever, I took out my *launcelot*, and forthwith opened a large *artifice* here in one of the juglers: the doctor bled like a pig.

Devil. I dare say.

Last. But it did the business, howsomdever; I compassed the job.

Devil. What, he recovered!

Last. Recovered? Lord help you! why, but last Sunday was se'nnight—to be sure, the doctor is given to weeze a little, because why, he is main *opulent*, and apt to be tisicky—but he composed as sweet a discourse—I slept from beginning to end.

Devil. That was composing, indeed.

Last. Ay, warn't it, master, for a man that is strucken in years?

Devil. Oh, a wonderful effort!

Last. Well, like your worship, and, besides all this I have been telling you, I have a pretty tight hand at a tooth.

Devil. Indeed?

Last. Ay; and I'll say a bold word, that, in drawing a thousand, I never stumpt a man in my life: now let your Rasperini's, and all your foreign mounseers, with their fine dainty freeches, say the like, if they can.

Devil. I defy them.

Last. So you may. Then, about a dozen years ago, before these here Suttons made such a noise, I hid some thoughts of *occupying* for the small-pox.

Devil. Ay; that would have wound up your bottom at once. And, why did not you?

Last. Why, I don't know, master; the neighbours were frightful, and would not consent; other-

wise, by this time, 'tis my belief, men, women, and children, I might have *occupied* twenty thousand at least.

Devil. Upon my word!—But, you say a dozen years, master Last: as you have practised physic without permission so long, what makes you now think of getting a license!

Last. Why, it is all along with one Lotion, a *potter-carrier*, that lives in a little town hard by we; he is grown old and *lascivious*, I think, and threatens to present me at 'size, if so be I practize any longer.

Devil. What, I suppose you run away with the business?

Last. Right, master; you have guessed the matter at once. So I was telling my tale to Sawney M'Gregor, who comes now and then to our town with his pack; God, he advised me to get made a doctor at once, and send for a *diplummy* from Scotland.

Devil. Why, that was the right road, master Last.

Last. True. But my master Tith'em tells me, that I can get it done for pretty near the same price here in London; so, I had rather, d'ye see, lay out my money at home, than transport it to foreign parts, as we say; because why, master, I think there has too much already gone that road.

Devil. Spoke like an Englishman!

Last. I have a pair of shoes here, to carry home to farmer Fallow's son, that lives with master Grogram, the mercer, hard by here, in Cheapside; so I thought I might as well do both businesses under one.

Devil. True. Your way, master Last, lies before you; the second street, you must turn to the left; then enter the first great gates that you see.

Last. And who must I ask for?

Devil. Oh, pull out your purse; you will find that hint sufficient: it is a part of the world where a fee is never refused.

Last. Thank you, master! You are main kind; very civil indeed! [*Going, returns.*] I wish, master, you had now either the agar or jaundarse; I would set you right in a trice.

Devil. Thank you, master Last; but I am as well as I am.

Last. Or, if so be you likes to open a vein, or would have a tooth or two knocked out of your head, I'll do it for nothing.

Devil. Not at present, I thank you! when I want, I'll call at your house in the country.

[*Exit* LAST.

Well, my young couple, and what say you now?

Inv. Say, sir? that I am more afraid of being sick, than ever I was in my life.

Devil. Pho! you know nothing as yet. But, my time draws nigh for possessing the President: if I could but get some intelligent person, to conduct you to the place where the Licentiates assemble—There seems a sober, sedate-looking lad; perhaps he may answer our purpose. Hark'ee, young man!

Enter JOHNNY MACPHERSON.

Macp. What's your wul, sir? would you spear aught wi me?

Devil. Though I think I can give a good guess, pray from what part of the world may you come?

Macp. My name is Johnny Macpherson, and I come out of the north.

Devil. Are you in business at present?

Macp. I conna say that, sir, nor that I am interly dastitute neither: but I sal be unco glad to get a mair solid estaablishment.

Devil. Have you been long in this town?

Macp. Aboot a month awa, sir: I launded fra Leith, in the gude ship the Traquair, Davy Donaldson maister, and am lodged wi Sawney Sinclair, at the sign o'the Ceety of Glascow, not far fra the Monument.

Devil. But you are in employment?

Macp. Ay, for some paart of the day.

Devil. And to what may your profits amount?

Macp. Ah! for the matter of that, it is a praty smart little income.

Devil. Is it a secret how much?

Macp. Not at aw: I get three-pence an hour for larning Latin to a physician in the ceety.

Devil. The very man that we want.—Latin! and, what, are you capable?

Macp. Cappable! Hut awa, mon! Ken ye, that I was heed of the humanity-class for mair than a twalvemonth? and was offered the chair of the gramatical professorship in the college, which amunts to a mater of sux pounds British a year.

Devil. That's more than I knew. Can you guess, sir, where your scholar is now?

Macp. It is na long, sir, that I laft him conning his *As in præsenti*; after which, he talked of ganging to meet some friends o'the faculty, aboot a sort of a squabble, that he says is sprang up among them; he wanted me to gang along wi him, as I had gi'n myself to study madicine a little, before I quitted the north.

Devil. Do you know the public-house where they meet?

Macp. Yes, yes; unco weel, sir; it is at the tavern the south side of Paul's kirk.

Devil. Will you take the trouble to conduct this young couple thither? they will amply reward you.—You and your partner will follow this lad. Fear nothing! by my art, you are invisible to all but those that you desire should see you. At the college we shall rejoin one another; for thither the Licentiates will lead you.

Inv. But how shall we be able to distinguish you from the rest of the fellows?

Devil. By my large wig, and superior importance; in a word, you must look for me in the PRESIDENT.

Inv. Adieu! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE—A Street.

FINGERFEE, SLIGO, OSASAFRAS, BROADBRIM, *other Doctors, and* MACPHERSON, *discovered.*

Fing. No; I can't help thinking this was by much the best method. If, indeed, they refuse us an amicable entrance, we are then justified in the use of corrosives.

Sligo. I tell you, Dr. Fingerfee—I am sorry, d'ye see, to differ from so old a practitioner; but I don't like your prescription at all, at all: for what signifies a palliative *regiment*, with such a rotten constitution? May I never finger pulse as long as I live, if you get their voluntary consent to go in, unless, indeed, it be by compulsion.

Osas. I entirely coincide with my very capable countryman Dr. Sligo, d'ye see; and do give my advice in this consultation, for putting the whole college under a course of steel, without further delay.

Sligo. I am much obligated to you for your kind compliment, doctor. But, pray, what may your name be?

Osas. Dr. Osasafras, at your humble service.

Sligo. I am your very obadient, alsho! I have hard tell of your name. But, what did you mane by *my countryman?* Pray, doctor, of what nation are you?

Osas. Sir, I have the honour to be a native of Ireland.

Sligo. Osasafras! That's a name of no note; he is not a Milesian, I am sure. The family, I suppose, came over t'other day with Strongbow, not above seven or eight hundred years ago; or perhaps a descendant from one of Oliver's drummers.—'Pon my conscience, doctor, I should hardly belave you were Irish.

Osas. What, sir, d'ye doubt my veracity?

Sligo. Not at all, my dear doctor; it is not for that: but, between me and yourself, you have lived a long time in this town.

Osas. Like enough.

Sligo. Ay; and was here a great while before ever I saw it.

Osas. What of that?

Sligo. Very well, my dear doctor: then, putting that and t'other together, my notion of the upshot is, that if so be you are a native of Ireland, upon my conscience, you must have been born there very young.

Osas. Young? ay, to be sure: why, my soul, I was christened there.

Sligo. Ay!

Osas. Ay, was I, in the county of Meath.

Sligo. Oh, that alters the property: that makes it as clear as Fleet-Ditch. I should be glad, countryman, of your nearer acquaintance.—But what little slim doctor is that, in his own head of hair? I don't recollect to have seen his features before.

Osas. Nor I, to my knowledge.

Sligo. Perhaps he may be able to tell me, if I ask him *himself.*—I am proud to see you, doctor, on this occasion; becaase why, it becomes every jontleman that is of the faculty—that is, that is not of their faculty; you understand me—to look about him and stir.

Macp. Oh, by my troth, you are right, sir; the leemiting of physic aw to ain hoose, caw it a a college, or by what denomination you wul, it is at best but estaablishing a sort of monopoly.

Sligo. 'Pon my conscience, that is a fine observation. By the twist of your tongue, doctor, (no offence) I should be apt to guess that you might be a foreigner born.

Macp. Sirr!

Sligo. From Russia, perhaps, or Muscovy?

Macp. Hut awa, mon! not at aw: 'zounds, I am a Breeton.

Sligo. Then, I should suppose, doctor, pretty far to the northward.

Macp. Ay; you are right, sir.

Sligo. And pray, doctor, what particular branch of our business may have taken up the most of your time?

Macp. Botany.

Sligo. Botany! in what college?

Macp. The university of St. Andrew's.

Osas. Pray, doctor, is not botany a very dry sort of a study?

Sligo. Most damnably so in those parts, my dear doctor; for all the knowledge they have they must get from dried herbs, becaase the devil of any green that will grow there.

Macp. Sir, your information is wrong.

Sligo. Come, my dear doctor, hold your palaver, and don't be after puffing on us, becaase why, you know in your conscience, that in your part of the world you get no cabbage but thistles; and these you are obliged to raise upon hotbeds.

Macp. Thistles! 'zounds, sir, d'ye mean to affront me?

Sligo. That, doctor, is as you plaases to taake it.

Macp. God's life, sir, I would ha' you to ken, that there is narra a mon wi his heed upon his shoulders, that dare——

Fing. Peace, peace, gentlemen! let us have no civil discord. Doctor Sligo is a lover of pleasantry; but, I am sure, had no design to affront you: a joke, nothing else.

Macp. A joke! ah; I like a joke weel enough; but I did na understond the doctor's gibing and jeering: perhaps my wut may not be aw together as sharp as the doctor's, but I have a sword, sir—

Sligo. A sword, sir!

Fing. A sword! ay, ay; there is no doubt but you have both very good ones; but reserve them for—Oh! here comes our ambassador.

Enter DIACHYLON.

Well, Dr. Diachylon, what news from the college? will they allow us free ingress and egress?

Diac. I could not get them to swallow a single demand.

All. No?

Sligo. Then let us drive there, and drench them.

Diac. I was heard with disdain, and refused with an air of defiance.

Sligo. There, gentlemen! I foretold you what would happen at first.

All. He did, he did.

Sligo. Then we have nothing for it, but to force our passage at once.

All. By all means; let us march!

Broad. Friend Fingerfee, would our brethren but incline their ears to me for a minute—

Fing. Gentlemen, Dr. Broadbrim desires to be heard.

All. Hear him, hear him!

Sligo. Paw, honey, what signifies hearing? I long to be doing, my jewel!

Fing. But hear Dr. Melchisedech Broadbrim, however.

All. Ay, ay; hear Dr. Broadbrim!

Broad. Fellow-labourers in the same vineyard! Ye know well how much I stand inclined to our cause; forasmuch as not one of my brethren can be more zealous than I——

All. True, true.

Broad. But ye wot also, that I hold it not meet or wholesome to use a carnal weapon, even for the defence of myself; much more unseemly, then, must I deem it to draw the sword for the offending of others.

Sligo. Paw! brother doctors, don't let him bother us, with his *yea* and *nay* nonsense!

Broad. Friend Sligo, do not be choleric; and know, that I am as free to draw my purse in this cause, as thou art thy sword: and thou wilt find,

at the length, notwithstanding thy swaggering, that the first will do us best service.

Sligo. Well, but——

All. Hear him, hear him!

Broad. It is my motion, then, brethren, that we do forthwith send for a sinful man in the flesh, called an attorney.

Sligo. An attorney!

Broad. Ay, an attorney; and that we do direct him to take out a parchment instrument, with a seal fixed thereto.

Sligo. Paw, pox! what good can that do?

Broad. Don't be too hasty, friend Sligo.—And therewith, I say, let him possess the outward tabernacle of the vain man, who delighteth to call himself President, and carry him before the men clothed in lambskin, who at Westminster are now sitting in judgement.

Sligo. Paw! a law-suit! that won't end with our lives.—Let us march!

All. Ay, ay.

Sligo. Come, Dr. Habakkuk, will you march in the front or the rear?

Hab. Pardon me, doctor! I cannot attend you.

Sligo. What, d'ye draw back, when it comes to the push?

Hab. Not at all; I would gladly join in putting these Philistines to flight; for I abhor them worse than hogs' puddings, in which the unclean beast and the blood are all jumbled together.

Sligo. Pretty food for all that.

Hab. But this is Saturday; and I dare not draw my sword on the sabbath.

Sligo. Then stay with your brother Melchisedech; for, though of different religions, you are

both of a kidney. Come, doctors; out with your swords! Huzza! and now for *the lane!* Huzza!

[*Exeunt.*

Manent BROADBRIM *and* HABAKKUK.

Broad. Friend Habakkuk, thou seest how headstrong and wilful these men are; but let us use discretion, however. Wilt thou step to the inn that taketh its name from the city of Lincoln? inquire there for a man, with a red rag at his back, a small black cap on his pate, and a bushel of hair on his breast? I think they call him a sergeant.

Hab. They do.

Broad. Then, without let or delay, bring him hither, I pray thee.

Hab. I will about it this instant.

Broad. His admonition, perhaps, may prevail. Use despatch, I beseech thee, friend Habakkuk.

Hab. As much as if I was posting to the Treasury, to obtain a large subscription for a new loan, or to bid for a lottery.

Broad. Nay, then, friend, I have no reason to fear thee.

[*Exeunt.*

The College.

DEVIL *(as* HELLEBORE, *the President)*, CAMPHIRE, CALOMEL, *Secretary, and Pupils discovered.*

Sec. The Licentiates, sir, will soon be at hand.

Hel. Let them!

Cal. We will do our duty, however; and, like the patricians of old, receive with silence these Visigoths in the senate.

Hel. I am not, Dr. Calomel, of so pacific a

turn? let us keep the evil out of doors, if we can; if not, *vim vi*, repel force by force. Barricado the gates!

Sec. It is done.

Hel. Are the buckets and fire-engine fetched from St Dunstan's?

Sec. They have been here, sir, this half-hour.

Hel. Let twelve apothecaries be placed at the pump, and their apprentices supply 'em with water!

Sec. Yes, sir.

Hel. But let the engine be played by old Jollup, from James-street! Not one of the trade has a better hand at directing a pipe.

Sec. Mighty well, sir.

Hel. In the time of siege, every citizen ought in duty to serve. Having thus, brothers, provided a proper defence, let us coolly proceed to our business. Is there any body here to demand a license to-day?

Sec. A practitioner, Mr. President, out of the country.

Hel. Are the customary fees all discharged?

Sec. All, sir.

Hel. Then let our censors, Dr. Christopher Camphire, and Dr. Cornelius Calomel, introduce the petitioner for examination.

[*Exeunt* CAMPHIRE *and* CALOMEL. After this duty is despatched, we will then read the college and students a lecture.

Enter CAMPHIRE *and* CALOMEL, *with* LAST.

Last. First, let me lay down my shoes.

[*They advance, with three bows, to the table.*

Hel. Let the candidate be placed on a stool. What's the doctor's name?

Sec. Emanuel Last, Mr President.

Hel. Dr. Last, you have petitioned the college to obtain a license for the practice of physic; and though we have no doubt of your great skill and abilities, yet our duty compels us previously to ask a few questions: what academy had the honour to form you?

Last. Anan?

Hel. We want to know the name of the place where you have studied the science of physic.

Last. Dunstable.

Hel. That's some German university; so he can never belong to the college.

Last. Never; oh, no.

Hel. Now, sir, with regard to your physiological knowledge. By what means, Dr. Last, do you discover that a man is not well?

Last. By his complaint that he is ill.

Hel. Well replied! no surer prognostic.

All. None surer.

Hel. Then, as to recovering a subject that is ill —Can you venture to undertake the cure of an ague?

Last. With arra a man in the country.

Hel. By what means?

Last. By a charm.

Hel. And pray, of what materials may that charm be composed?

Last. I won't tell; 'tis a secret.

Hel. Well replied! the college has no right to pry into secrets.

All. Oh, no; by no means.

Hel. But now, Dr. Last, to proceed in due form; are you qualified to administer remedies to such diseases as belong to the head?

Last. I believe I may.

Hel. Name some to the college.

Last. The tooth-ache.

Hel. What do you hold the best method to treat it?

Last. I cures them radically.

Hel. By what means, doctor?

Last. Why, I pulls 'em up by the roots.

Hel. Well replied, brothers! that, without doubt, is a radical cure.

All. Without doubt.

Hel. Thus far as to the head: proceed we next to the middle! When, Dr. Last, you are called in to a patient with a pain in his bowels, what then is your method of practice?

Last. I claps a trencher, hot, to the part.

Hel. Embrocation; very well! But if this application should fail, what is the next step that you take?

Last. I gi's a vomit and a purge.

Hel. Well replied! for it is plain there is a disagreeable guest in the house; he has opened both doors; if he will go out at neither, it is none of his fault.

All. Oh, no; by no means.

Hel. We have now despatched the middle, and head: come we finally to the other extremity, the feet! Are you equally skilful in the disorders incidental to them?

Last. I believe I may.

Hel. Name some.

Last. I have a great vogue all our way for curing of corns.

Hel. What are the means that you use?

Last. I cuts them out.

Hel. Well replied! extirpation: no better method of curing can be practised. Well, brethren, I think we may now, after this strict and impartial inquiry, safely certify that Dr. Emanuel Last, from top to toe, is an able physician.

All. Very able, very able, indeed.

Hel. And every way qualified to proceed in his practice.

All. Every way qualified.

Hel. You may descend, Dr. Last. [*Last takes his seat among them.*] Secretary, first read, and then give the doctor his license.

Sec. [*Reads*] "To all whom these presents may come, greeting: Know ye, that, after a most strict and severe inquisition, not only into the great skill and erudition, but the morals of Dr. Emanuel Last, we are authorised to grant unto the said doctor full power, permission, and license, to pill, bolus, lotion, potion, draught, dose, drench, purge, bleed, blister, clyster, cup, scarify, syringe, salivate, couch, flux, sweat, diet, dilute, tap, plaster, and poultice, all persons, in all diseases, of all ages, conditions, and sexes. And we do strictly command and enjoin all surgeons, apothecaries, with their apprentices, all midwives, male, female, and nurses, at all times, to be aiding and assisting to the said Dr. Emanuel Last. And we do further charge all mayors, justices, aldermen, sheriffs, bailiffs, headboroughs, constables, and coroners, not to molest or intermeddle with the said doctor, if any party whom he shall so pill, bolus, lotion, potion, draught, dose, drench, purge, bleed, blister, clyster, cup, scarify, syringe, salivate, couch, flux, sweat, diet, dilute, tap, plaster, and poultice, should happen to die, but to deem that the said party died a natural death, any thing appearing to the contrary notwithstanding. Given under our hands, &c. Hercules Hellebore, Cornelius Calomel, Christopher Camphire."

Last. Then, if a patient die, they must not say that I killed him?

Hel. They say? why, how should they know, when it is not one time in twenty that we know it ourselves?—Proceed we now to the lecture! [*They all rise and come forward to the table.*] Brethren, and students, I am going to open to you some notable discoveries that I have made, respecting the source, or primary cause, of all distempers incidental to the human machine: and these, brethren, I attribute to certain animalculæ, or piscatory entities, that insinuate themselves through the pores into the blood, and, in that fluid, sport, toss, and tumble about, like mackarel or cod-fish in the great deep: and to convince you that this is not a mere *gratis dictum*, an hypothesis only, I will give you demonstrative proof. Bring hither the microscope!

Enter a SERVANT *with Microscope.*

Doctor Last, regard this receiver. Take a peep.

Last. Where?

Hel. There. Those two yellow drops there were drawn from a subject afflicted with the jaundice.—Well, what d'ye see?

Last. Some little creatures like yellow flies, that are hopping and skipping about.

Hel. Right. Those yellow flies give the tinge to the skin, and undoubtedly cause the disease: and, now, for the cure! I administer to every patient the two-and-fiftieth part of a scruple of the ovaria or eggs of the spider; these are thrown by the digestive powers into the secretory, there separated from the alimentary, and then precipitated into the circulatory; where finding a proper nidus, or nest, they quit their torpid state, and vivify, and, upon vivification, discerning the flies, their natural food, they immediately fall foul of them,

extirpate the race out of the blood, and restore the patient to health.

Last. And what becomes of the spiders?

Hel. Oh, they die, you know, for want of nutrition. Then, I send the patient down to Brightelmstone; and, a couple of dips in the salt-water, washes the cobwebs entirely out of the blood. Now, gentlemen, with respect to the——

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Forceps, from the hospital.

Hel. The hospital! is this a time to——

Enter FORCEPS.

Well, Forceps, what's your will?

For. To know, sir, what you would have done with the hospital patients to-day?

Hel. To-day, why, what was done yesterday?

For. Sir, we bled the west ward, and jalloped the north.

Hel. Did ye? why then, bleed the north ward, and jallop the west to day. [*Exit.* FOR. Now, I say, brethren——

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. The licentiates are drawn up at the gate.

Hel. Who leads 'em?

Serv. They are led on by Sligo: they demand instant entrance, and threaten to storm.

Hel. Doctors Calomel and Camphire, our two aid-de-camps, survey their present posture, and report it to us.

[*Without.*] Huzza!

Hel. Bid old Jollup be ready to unmask the engine at the word of command.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Hel. Now, Dr. Camphire?

Camp. The sledge-hammers are come, and they prepare to batter in breach.

Hel. Let the engine be played off at the very first blow! [*Exit* CAMP.

[*Without.*] Huzza!

Enter CALOMEL.

Hel. Now, doctor?

Cal. The first fire has demolished Dr. Fingerfee's foretop.

Hel. That's well! [*Exit.* CAL.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, doctor?

Camp. The second fire has dropped the stiff buckles of Dr. Osasafras.

Hel. Better and better! [*Exit* CAMP.

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. Both the knots of Dr. Anodyne's tie are dissolved.

Hel. Best of all! [*Exit* CAL.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, doctor?

Camp. As Dr. Sligo, with open mouth, drove furiously on, he received a full stream in his teeth, and is retired from the field, dropping wet.

Hel. Then the day's our own! [*Exit* CAMP.

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. All is lost! Dr. Sligo, recruited by a bumper of Drogheda, is returned with fresh vigour.

Hel. Let our whole force be pointed at him!

[*Exit* CAL.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, doctor?

Camp. The siege slackens; Dr. Broadbrim, with sergeant Demur, are arrived in the camp. [*Exit.*

Hel. What can that mean?

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. Sergeant Demur has thrown [illegible] over the gate.

Hel. [*looking at the parchment*] [illegible] dlesex to wit. John Doe and Rich[illegible] is a challenge to meet 'em at We[illegible] then we have breathing-time till the [illegible]

Enter LAST.

Now, doctor?

Last. I have forgot my shoes.

[*Takes them up, and exit.*

Hel. Oh!

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Camp. The licentiates file off towards Fleet-street.

Hel. Follow all, and harass the rear! leave not a dry thread among them. Huzza! [*Exeunt*

Re-enter DEVIL, INVOICE, *and* HARRIET.

Devil. Well, my young friends, you will now be naturally led to Westm——Oh!

Inv. Bless me, sir, what's the matter? You change colour and falter.

Devil. The magician at Madrid has discovered my flight, and recalls me by an irresistible spell: I must leave you, my friends!

Inv. Forbid it, Fortune! it is now, sir, that we most want your aid.

Devil. He must, he will be obeyed. Hereafter, perhaps, I may rejoin you again.

Inv. But, sir, what can we do? how live? what plan can we fix on for our future support?

Devil. You are in a country where your talents, with a little application, will procure you a provision.

Inv. But which way to direct them?

Devil. There are profitable professions, that require but little ability.

Inv. Name us one.

Devil. What think you of the trade with whose knowledge I am at present invested?

Inv. Can you suppose, sir, after what I have seen——

Devil. Oh, sir, I don't design to engage you in any personal service; I would only recommend it to you to be the vender of some of those infallible remedies with which our newspapers are constantly crowded.

Inv. You know, sir, I am possessed of no secret.

Devil. Nor they either: a few simple waters, dignified with titles that catch, no matter how wild and absurd, will effectually answer your purpose: as, let me see now! tincture of cinder, essence of eggshell, or balsam of broomstick.

Inv. You must excuse me, sir; I can never submit.

Devil. I think you are rather too squeamish. What say you, then, to a little spiritual quackery?

Inv. Spiritual!

Devil. Oh, sir, there are in this town mountebanks for the mind as well as the body. How should you like mounting a cart on a common, and becoming a Methodist preacher?

Inv. Can that scheme turn to account?

Devil. Nothing better: believe me, the absolute direction of the persons and purses of a large congregation, however low their conditions and callings, is by no means a contemptible object. I, for my own part, can say, what the conqueror of Persia said to the Cynic; "If I was not Alexander I would be Diogenes:" so, if I was not the Devil, I would choose to be a Methodist preacher.

Inv. But then the restraint, the forms, I shall be obliged to observe——

Devil. None at all: there is, in the whole catalogue, but one sin you need be at all shy of committing.

Inv. What's that?

Devil. Simony.

Inv. Simony! I don't comprehend you.

Devil. Simony, sir, is a new kind of canon, devised by these upstart fanatics, that makes it sinful not to abuse the confidence, and piously plunder the little property, of an indigent man and his family.

Inv. A most noble piece of casuistical cookery, and exceeds even that of the sons of Ignatius! But this honour I must beg to decline.

Devil. What think you, then, of trying the stage? You are a couple of good theatrical figures; but how are your talents? can you sing?

Inv. I can't boast of much skill, sir; but Miss Harriet got great reputation in Spain.

Har. Oh, Mr. Invoice! My father, sir, as we seldom went out, established a domestic kind of drama, and made us perform some little musical pieces, that were occasionally sent us from England.

Devil. Come, sir, will you give us a taste of your—just a short—*te ti te tor*

[*Sings a short preludio.*

Inv. I must beg to be excused, sir; I have not a musical note in my voice that can please you.

Devil. No? Why then, I believe we must trouble the lady: come, miss, I'll charm a band to accompany you. [*Waves his stick.*

[HARRIET *sings.*]

Devil. Exceedingly well? You have nothing to do now, but to offer yourselves to one of the houses.

Inv. And which, sir, would you recommend?

Devil. Take your choice; for I can serve you in neither.

Inv. No? I thought, sir, you told me, just now, that the several arts of the drama were under your direction.

Devil. So they were formerly; but now they are directed by the Genius of Insipidity: he has entered into partnership with the managers of both houses, and they have set up a kind of circulating library, for the vending of dialogue novels. I dare not go near the new houses, for the Demon of Power, who gave me this lameness, has possessed the pates, and sown discord among the mock monarchs there; and what one receives, the other rejects. And as to the other house, the manager has great merit himself, with skill to discern, and candour to allow it in others; but I can be of no

use in making your bargain, for in that he would be too many for the cunningest Devil amongst us.

Inv. I have heard of a new playhouse in the Haymarket.

Devil. What, Foote's? Oh, that's an eccentric, narrow establishment; a mere summer-fly! He! But, however, it may do for a *coup d'essai*, and prove no bad foundation for a future engagement.

Inv. Then we will try him, if you please.

Devil. By all means: and you may do it this instant; he opens to-night, and will be glad of your assistance. I'll drop you down at the door; and must then take my leave for some time. *Allons!* but don't tremble; you have nothing to fear: the public will treat you with kindness; at least, if they show but half the indulgence to you, that they have upon all occasions shewn to that manager.

DR. LAST IN HIS CHARIOT—*three acts*, appeared the season following (1769), from the pen of Isaac Bickerstaff, but to which Mr. Foote contributed a scene in the first act. It consisted of a consultation of physicians on *the case* of Ailwou'd, the principal character, performed by Foote himself. What share he took in the other scenes of this piece does not appear, but it survived six nights only, or at most nine,* not being sufficiently "adapted to *the English* stage," however well it might have succeeded in the original French of *Moliere*. Yet *Le Malade imaginaire*, appears to contain good machinery for raising an excellent laugh at the cupidity of the English in regard to quackery, and the disposition to be everlastingly indisposed: a more literal translation had appeared previously in the "Comic Theatre from the French," 5 vols. 12mo. to which collection Foote had contributed some aid seven years before.

A prologue, written by Garrick and spoken by Foote, scarcely saved the piece from condemnation the very first night; an opposition that was continued, too, notwithstanding some material alterations that were subsequently introduced: it *reads* well.

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* The accounts disagree—Baker says *six*—W. Cooke, *nine;* the variance is not material to my point.

THE

LAME LOVER:

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

FRANCIS SEYMOUR CONWAY,

EARL OF HERTFORD,

LORD CHAMBERLAIN OF

HIS MAJESTY'S HOUSEHOLD,

TO WHOSE

POLITENESS AND CANDOUR

The Author

OWES EVERY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT,

THIS COMEDY IS

GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST OBLIGED

AND

MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

SAM. FOOTE.

North End.

REMARKS.

AFTER lying *fallow* a year, the muse of Foote might have been reasonably expected to produce something more luxuriant than the Lame Lover proved. With a meagre plot, and law technicalities and allusions but little known, this proof of his versatility did little towards rescuing the piece from cold neglect, notwithstanding the current belief, that in Sir Luke Limp he followed the advice of some jocose friend and *took himself off*. It appeared in the summer of 1770, and disappeared from the stage ever after, though in the closet it never fails to please, by reason of the opportunity that is thus afforded of reconsidering the legal burlesque of the Sergeant, and the ridicule with which it is met by his prolocutors. Yet, the impropriety of giving the extract from old Plowden's Norman French, in the very first page, must strike every reader; as will also the *length* of the first scene, which is intended to introduce the principal character, *Sir Luke*, to the audience: it tires the patience if it do not pall the taste, notwithstanding the excellent sallies of *Charlotte*. The Sergeant and his son were also considered portraits, to which numbers might sit for their likeness.

PROLOGUE.

Written and Spoken by MR. GENTLEMAN.

PROLOGUES, like cards of compliment, we find,
Most as unmeaning as politely kind;
To beg a favour, or to plead excuse,
Of both appears to be the general use.
Shall my words, tipt with flattery, prepare
A kind exertion of your tend'rest care?
Shall I present our Author to your sight,
All pale and trembling for his fate this night?
Shall I solicit the most pow'rful arms
To aid his cause—the force of beauty's charms?
Or tell each critic, his approving taste
Must give the sterling stamp, wherever plac'd?
This might be done—but so to seek applause
Argues a conscious weakness in the cause.
No—let the Muse in simple truth appear,
Reason and *Nature* are the judges here:
If by their strict and self-describing laws,
The sev'ral characters to-night she draws;
If from the whole a pleasing piece is made,
On the true principles of light and shade;
Struck with the harmony of just design,
Your eyes—your ears—your hearts, will all combine
To grant applause:—but, if an erring hand
Gross disproportion marks in motley band;
If the group'd figures false connexions show,
And glaring colours without meaning glow,
Your wounded feelings, turn'd a diff'rent way,
Will justly damn—the *abortion* of a play.
As Farquhar has observ'd, our English law,
Like a fair spreading oak, the Muse should draw,
By Providence design'd, and wisdom made
For honesty to thrive beneath its shade;

Yet from its boughs some insects shelter find,
Dead to each nobler feeling of the mind,
Who thrive, alas! too well, and never cease
To prey on justice, property, and peace.
At such to-night, with other *legal* game,
Our vent'rous author takes satiric aim;
And brings, he hopes, originals to view,
Nor pilfers from th' Old Magpie, nor the New:*
But will to Candour cheerfully submit—
She reigns in boxes, galleries, and pit.

* Alluding to Mr. Garrick's Prologue to the Jubilee.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR LUKE LIMP	*Mr. Foote.*
SERGEANT CIRCUIT	*Mr. Vandermere.*
COLONEL SECRET	*Mr. Robson.*
JACK	*Mr. Weston.*
MR. WOODFORD	*Mr. Knowles.*
MR. FAIRPLAY	*Mr. Wheeler.*
First Servant	*Mr. Dancer.*
Second Servant	*Mr. Griffiths.*

WOMEN.

MRS. CIRCUIT	*Mrs. Gardner.*
CHARLOTTE	*Mrs. Jewell.*
MRS. SIMPER	*Mrs. Saunders.*
BETTY	*Mrs. Read.*

THE

LAME LOVER.

ACT I.

Enter SERGEANT CIRCUIT *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. I TELL you, sir, his love to me is all a pretence: it is amazing that you, who are so acute, so quick in discerning on other occasions, should be so blind upon this.

Ser. But where are your proofs, Charlotte? What signifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot support?

Char. Surely, sir, strong circumstances in every court should have weight.

Ser. So they have, collaterally, child, that is by way as it were of corroboration, or where matters are doubtful; then, indeed, as Plowden wisely, observes "*Les circonstances ajout beaucoup de-poids aux faits.*"—You understand me?

Char. Not perfectly well.

Ser. Then, to explain by case in point; As we will suppose, my dear, Jobs B of a watch, upon Hounslow-heath—d'ye mind, child?

Char. I do, sir.

Ser. A is taken up and indicted; B swears positively to the identity of A.—D'ye observe?

Char. Attentively.

Ser. Then, what does me A, but sets up the alibi C, to defeat the affidavit of B.—You take me?

Char. Clearly.

Ser. So far you see, then, the balance is even.

Char. True.

Ser. But then, to turn the scale, child, against A, in favour of B, they produce the circumstance D, viz. B's watch found in the pocket of A; upon which, the testimony of C being contradicted by B,—no, by D,—why then A, that is to say C,—no D,—joining B, they convict C,—no, no, A,—against the affidavit of C.—So this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

Char. Very obliging, sir. But suppose now, sir, it should appear that the attention of Sir Luke Limp is directed to some other object, would not that induce you to—

Ser. Other object! Where?

Char. In this very house.

Ser. Here! why the girl is *non compos;* there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigails.

Char. No, sir!

Ser. No.

Char. Yes, sir; one person else.

Ser. Who is that?

Char. But remember, sir, my accusation is confined to Sir Luke.

Ser. Well, well.

Char. Suppose then, sir, those powerful charms which made a conquest of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke?

Ser. Why, hussy, you don't hint at your mother-in-law?

Char. Indeed, sir, but I do.

Ser. Ay; why this is point blank treason against my sovereign authority: but can you, Charlotte, bring proof of any overt acts?

Char. Overt acts!

Ser. Ay; that is any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth is sufficient; then let them demur if they dare.

Char. I can't say that, sir; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

Ser. Which?

Char. In those cases a very infallible one—the eye.

Ser. Pshaw! nonsense and stuff.—The eye!—The eye is no authority in a court of law.

Char. Perhaps not, sir; but it is a decisive evidence in a court of love.

Ser. Hark you, hussy: why, you would not file an information against the virtue of madam your mother; you would not insinuate that she has been guilty of *crim con?*

Char. Sir, you mistake me; it is not the lady, but the gentleman, I am about to impeach.

Ser. Have a care, Charlotte! I see on what ground your action is founded—jealousy.

Char. You were never more deceived in your life; for it is impossible, my dear sir, that jealousy can subsist without love.

Ser. Well.

Char. And from that passion (thank heaven) I am pretty free at present.

Ser. Indeed!

Char. A sweet object to excite tender desires!

Ser. And why not, hussy?

Char. First as to his years.

Ser. What then?

Char. I own, sir, age procures honour, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

Ser. Mighty well.

Char. And, though the loss of a leg cannot be imputed to Sir Luke Limp as a fault—

Ser. How!

Char. I hope, sir, at least you will allow it a misfortune.

Ser. Indeed!

Char. A pretty thing, truly, for a girl at my time of life to be tied to a man with one foot in the grave.

Ser. One foot in the grave! the rest of his body is not a whit the nearer for that.—There has been only an execution issued against part of his personals, his real estate is unencumbered and free—besides, you see he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry, as a defendant after non-suiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

Char. Oh! sir! I know how proud Sir Luke is of his leg, and have often heard him declare, that he would not change his bit of timber for the best flesh and bone in the kingdom.

Ser. There's a hero for you!

Char. To be sure, sustaining unavoidable evils with constancy is a certain sign of greatness of mind.

Ser. Doubtless.

Char. But then, to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not, I am afraid, be admitted as a vast instance of wisdom; and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to distinguish himself by.

Ser. How does that follow?

Char. By inuendo.

Ser. Negatur.

Char. Besides, sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mentioned.

Ser. Cite them.

Char. The paltry ambition of levying, and of following titles.

Ser. Titles! I don't understand you?

Char. I mean the poverty of fastening in public upon men of distinction, for no other reason but because of their rank; adhering to Sir John till the Baronet is superseded by my Lord; quitting the puny Peer for an Earl; and sacrificing all three to a Duke.

Ser. Keeping good company! a laudable ambition!

Char. True, sir; if the virtues that procured the father a peerage could with that be entailed on the son.

Ser. Have a care, hussy—there are severe laws against speaking evil of dignities.—

Char. Sir!

Ser. Scandalum magnatum is a statute that must not be trifled with: why, you are not one of those vulgar sluts that think a man the worse for being a lord?

Char. No, sir; I am content with only not thinking him the better.

Ser. For all this, I believe, hussy, a right honourable proposal would soon make you alter your mind.

Char. Not unless the proposer had other qualities than what he possesses by patent. Besides, sir, you know Sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

Ser. Not a whit the less honest for that.

Char. It occasions one evil at least; that when

under its influence, he generally reveals all, sometimes more than he knows.

Ser. Proofs of an open temper, you baggage: but, come, come, all these are but trifling objections.

Char. You mean, sir, they prove the object a trifle.

Ser. Why, you pert jade, do you play on my words? I say, Sir Luke is—

Char. Nobody.

Ser. Nobody! how the deuce do you make that out?—He is neither person attainted nor outlawed; may in any of his Majesty's courts sue or be sued, appear by attorney, or *in propria persona;* can acquire, buy, procure, purchase, possess and inherit, not only personalities, such as goods and chattels, but even realities, as all lands, tenements and hereditaments, whatsoever, and wheresoever.

Char. But, sir—

Ser. Nay, further, child, he may sell, give, bestow, bequeath, devise, demise, lease, or to farm let, ditto lands, to any person whomsoever —and—

Char. Without doubt, sir; but there are, notwithstanding, in this town a great number of nobodies, not described by Lord Coke.

Ser. Hey!

Char. There is your next-door neighbour, Sir Harry Hen, an absolute blank.

Ser. How so, Mrs. Pert?

Char. What, sir! a man who is not suffered to hear, see, smell, or, in short, to enjoy the free use of any one of his senses; who, instead of having a positive will of his own, is denied even a paltry negative; who can neither resolve or re-

ply, consent or deny, without first obtaining the leave of his lady: an absolute monarch to sink into the sneaking state of being a slave to one of his subjects.—Oh fie!

Ser. Why, to be sure, Sir Harry Hen is, as I may say—

Char. Nobody, sir, in the fullest sense of the word.—Then your client Lord Solo.

Ser. Heyday! Why, you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious estate and an allowed judge, too, of the elegant arts?

Char. O yes, sir, I am no stranger to that nobleman's attributes; but then, sir, please to consider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy; the direction of his estate, to a rapacious, artful attorney: and as to his skill in the elegant arts, I presume you confine them to painting and music—he is directed in the first by Mynheer Van Eisel, a Dutch dauber; and in the last is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his lordship's mistress and an opera singer.

Ser. Mercy upon us! at what a rate the jade runs!

Char. In short, sir, I define every individual who, ceasing to act for himself, becomes the tool, the mere engine of another person's will, to be nothing more than a cipher.

Ser. At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world: but what is all this to Sir Luke? to him, not one of your cases apply.

Char. Every one—Sir Luke has not a first principle in his whole composition: not only his pleasures, but even his passions are prompted by others; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and dressing. Nay, though he is active, and

eternally busy, yet his own private affairs are neglected; and he would not scruple to break an appointment that was to determine a considerable part of his property, in order to exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himself best; I hear his *stump* on the stairs.

Ser. I hope you will preserve a little decency before your lover, at least.

Char. Lover! ha, ha, ha!

Enter Sir LUKE LIMP.

Sir Luke. Mr. Sergeant, your slave—Ah! are you there my little—O Lord! Miss, let me tell you something for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new christened, and have had me for a gossip?

Char. Christened! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Then lend me your ear—Why, last night, as Colonel Kill'em, Sir William Weezy, Lord Frederick Foretop, and I were carelessly sliding the Ranelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damned muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who should trip by but an abbess, well known about town, with a smart little nun in her suite. Says Weezy, (who, between ourselves, is as husky as hell,) who is that? odds flesh, she's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried Lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been, not to have seen *the Harietta* before? for you must know Frederick is a bit of a Macaroni, and adores the soft Italian termination in *a*.

Char. He does?

Sir Luke. Yes, a dilettante all over.—Before? replied [*echoed*] Weezy; crush me if ever I saw any thing half so handsome *before!*—No! replied

I in an instant; Colonel, what will Weezy say when he sees *the Charlotta?*—Hey! you little——

Char. Meaning me, I presume.

Sir Luke. Without doubt; and you have been toasted by that name ever since.

Ser. What a vast fund of spirits he has!

Sir Luke. And why not, my old splitter of causes?

Ser. I was just telling Charlotte that you was not a whit the worse for the loss.

Sir Luke. The worse! much the better, my dear. Consider, I can have neither strain, splint, spavin, or gout; have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man should kick my shins, or tread on my toes.

Ser. Right.

Sir Luke. What, d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumsticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

Ser. No.

Sir Luke. No, damn it, I am much better. Look there—Ha!—What is there I am not able to do? To be sure I am a little awkward at running; but then, to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his sum.

Ser. Ay, and I'll go his halves. *(to Charlotte.)*

Sir Luke. Then, as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, because of the crowd; but as far as a private set of six couple, or moving a chair-minuet, match me who can.

Char. A chair-minuet! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and chest, which may, sitting, be as fully displayed as if one had as many legs as a polypus. As thus—tol de rol—don't you see?

Ser. Very plain.

Sir Luke. A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature. In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are, with but half the things that we have.

Char. Ay, Sir Luke! how do you prove that?

Sir Luke. By constant experience. You must have seen the man who makes and uses pens without hands.

Ser. I have.

Sir Luke. And not a twelvemonth agone, I lost my way in a fog, at Mile-End, and was conducted to my house in May-Fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

Ser. Wonderful!

Sir Luke. And as to hearing and speaking, those organs are of no manner of use in the world.

Ser. How!

Sir Luke. If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family, dumb as oysters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

Ser. Why, Charlotte, these are cases in point.

Sir Luke. Oh! clear as a trout-stream; and it is not only, my little Charlotte, that this piece of timber answers every purpose, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

Ser. Ay!

Sir Luke. Why, it was but last summer, at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole season by a bullet-headed Swiss from the canton of Bern, who was always boasting what and how much he dared do; and then, as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes, held it more in contempt. "By gods, he vas no more minds it dan notings at all; so, foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

Ser. As how! mind, Charlotte.

Sir Luke. Why, to drive a corking pin into the calves of our legs.

Ser. Well, well.

Sir Luke. Mine, you may imagine, was easily done—but when it came to the baron—

Ser. Ay, ay,

Sir Luke. Our modern Cato soon lost his coolness and courage, screwed his nose up to his foretop, rapped out a dozen oaths in high Dutch, limped away to his lodgings, and was there laid up for a month—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT, *and delivers a Card to* SIR LUKE.

Sir Luke. (reads) "Sir Gregory Goose desires the honour of Sir Luke Limp's company to dine. An answer is desired." Gadso! a little unlucky; I have been engaged for these three weeks.

Ser. What, I find Sir Gregory is returned for the corporation of *Fleesum.*

Sir Luke. Is he so? Oh ho!—That alters the case. George, give my compliments to Sir Gregory, and I'll certainly come and dine there. Order Joe to run to Alderman Inkle's, in Threadneedle-street; sorry can't wait upon him, but confined to bed two days with *new influenza.*

Char. You make light, Sir Luke, of these sort of engagements.

Sir Luke. What can a man do? These damned fellows (when one has the misfortune to meet them) take scandalous advantage; teazing with, 'when will you do me the honour, pray, Sir Luke, to take a bit of mutton with me? Do you name the day.' They are as bad as a beggar, who attacks your coach at the mounting of a hill; there is no getting

rid of either, without a penny to one and a promise to the other.

Ser. True; and then for such a time too—three weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remember. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term for the summer assizes.

Sir Luke. Not but, upon those occasions, no man in England is more punctual than——

Enter a SERVANT, *who gives* SIR LUKE *a Letter.*

From whom?

Serv. Earl of Brentford. The servant waits for an answer.

Sir Luke. Answer!—By your leave, Mr. Sergeant and Charlotte. [*Reads.*] "Taste for music—Mons. Duport—fail—Dinner upon table at five"—Gadso! I hope Sir Gregory's servant an't gone?

Serv. Immediately upon receiving the answer.

Sir Luke. Run after him as fast as you can—tell him, quite in despair—recollect an engagement that can't in nature be missed, and return in an instant. [SERVANT *runs out.*

Char. You see, sir, the knight must give way for my lord.

Sir Luke. No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlotte; you saw that was quite an extempore business. No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but to tell you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his house.

Char. By the choice of his company, he gives an unanswerable instance of that.

Sir Luke. You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit: you know Brentford's finances are a little out of repair, which

procures him some visits that he would very gladly excuse.

Ser. What need he fear! his person is sacred; for by the tenth of William and Mary—

Sir Luke. He knows that well enough; but for all that—

Ser. Indeed, by a late act of his own house, (which does them infinite honour,) his goods or chattels may be——

Sir Luke. Seized upon when they can find them; but he lives in ready-furnished lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

Ser. Nay, if the sheriff return "*non est inventus*"—

Sir Luke. A pox o'your law, you make me lose sight of my story. One morning, a Welsh coach-maker came with his bill to my lord, whose name was, unluckily, Loyd. My Lord had the man up. You are called, I think, *Mr. Loyd?* 'At your lordship's service, my lord.'—— What, Loyd with an L?—'It was with an L indeed, my Lord.'—Because in your part of the world I have heard that Loyd and Floyd were synonymous, the very same names.—'Very often indeed, my lord.'—But you always spell your's with an L?—'Always.'—That, Mr. Loyd, is a little unlucky; for you must know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. There was no overtaking the servant.

Sir Luke. That is unlucky: tell my Lord I'll attend him. I'll call on Sir Gregory myself.

Ser. Why, you won't leave us, Sir Luke?

Sir Luke. Pardon, dear Sergeant and Charlotta; have a thousand things to do for half a million of people, positively; promised to procure a husband for Lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horse for Brigadier Whip; after that, must run into the city to borrow a thousand for young At-all at Almack's; send a Cheshire cheese by the stage to Sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get at the Heralds' Office a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arrived: so, you see, I have not a moment to lose.

Ser. True, true.

Sir Luke. At your toilet to-morrow at ten you may—

Enter a SERVANT *abruptly, and runs against* SIR LUKE.

Can't you see where you are running, you rascal?

Serv. Sir, his Grace the Duke of——

Sir Luke. Grace!—Where is he?—Where—

Serv. In his coach at the door. If you an't better engaged, would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Dolly's.

Sir Luke. In his own coach, did you say?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Luke. With the coronets—or—

Serv. I believe so.

Sir Luke. There's no resisting of that. Bid Joe run to Sir Gregory Goose's,—

Serv. He is already gone to Alderman Inkle's.

Sir Luke. Then, do you step to the knight—hey!—no—you must go to my lord's—hold, hold, no—I have it—Step first to Sir Greg's, then pop in at Lord Brentford's just as the company are going to dinner.

Serv. What shall I say to Sir Gregory?

Sir Luke. Any thing—what I told you before.

Serv. And what to my lord?

Sir Luke. What!—why, tell him that my uncle from Epsom—no—that won't do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—Why tell him—hold, I have it—Tell him, that as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arrested by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney coach, and carried to the Pied Bull in the Borough; I beg ten thousand pardons for making his Grace wait, but his Grace knows my misfor——

[*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Char. Well, sir, what d'ye think of the proofs? I flatter myself I have pretty well established my case.

Ser. Why, hussy, you have hit upon points; but then they are but trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title; that stands unimpeached; and—but, madam, your mother.

Enter MRS. CIRCUIT.

Mrs. Cir. What have you done with the knight?—Why, you have not let him depart?

Char. It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs. Cir. I don't wonder at that; but what took him away?

Char. What will at any time take him away—a Duke at the door.

Mrs. Cir. Are you certain of that?

Ser. Why, truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man that is just going to be married.

Mrs. Cir. The prospect of marriage does not always prove the strongest attachment.

Ser. Pardon me, lovee; the law allows no higher consideration than marriage.

Mrs. Cir. Pshaw!

Ser. Insomuch, that if duke A was to intermarry with chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the settlement.

Mrs. Cir. Indeed!

Ser. Ay; and this was held to be law by Chief-baron Bind'em, on the famous case of the Marquis of Cully and Fanny Flip-flap the French dancer.

Mrs. Cir. The greater blockhead the baron: but don't pester me with your odious law-cases. Did not you tell me you were to go to Kingston to day to try the crown causes?

Ser. I was begged to attend for fear his lordship should not be able to sit, but if it proves inconvenient to you——

Mrs. Cir. To me! Oh, by no means in the world; I am too good a subject to desire the least delay in the law's execution: and when d'ye set out?

Ser. Between one and two; I shall only just give a law-lecture to Jack.

Mrs. Cir. Lord! I wonder, Mr. Circuit, you would breed that boy up to the bar.

Ser. Why not, chuck? he has fine steady parts, and, for his time, moots a point—

Mrs. Cir. Steady! stupid, you mean: nothing, sure, could add to his heaviness but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him into the army?

Ser. Nay, chuck, if you choose it, I believe I have interest to get Jack a commission.

Mrs. Cir. Why, Mr. Circuit, you know he is no son of mine; perhaps a cockade may animate the lad with some fire.

Ser. True, lovee; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiss to restrain his fire a little.

Mrs. Cir. I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding that way.

Ser. Charlotte, send hither your brother.

[*Exit* CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. Cir. I'll not interrupt you.

Ser. Far from it, lovee; I should be glad to have you a witness of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs. Cir. Of that I am no judge; besides, I am full of business to day—There is to be a ballot at one for the *Ladies Club*, lately established, and lady Bab Basto has proposed me for a member.—Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my Lord Loo?

Ser. The three hundred you mean?

Mrs. Cir. And besides, there is my debt to Kitty Cribbage; I protest I almost blush whenever I meet them.

Ser. Why really, lovee, 'tis a large sum of money.—Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this business.

Mrs. Cir. I don't understand you.

Ser. Bring an action against them on the statute, in the name of my clerk; and so, not only rescue the *debt* from their hands, but recover, likewise, considerable *damages*.

Mrs. Cir. A pretty conceit, Mr. Sergeant! but does it not occur to your wisdom, that as I have (by the help of Captain Cog) been oftener a winner than loser, the tables may be turned upon *us?*

Ser. No, no, chuck, that did not escape me; I have provided for that.—Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable; so that, lovee, we shall be able to fleece your friends not only of what they have *won* of poor dearee, but likewise for what they have *lost*.

Mrs. Cir. Why, what a paltry, pettyfogging

puppy art thou!—And could you suppose that I would submit to the scandalous office?

Ser. Scandalous! I don't understand this strange perversion of words. The scandal lies in *breaking* the *laws*, not in bringing the offenders to *justice*.

Mrs. Cir. Mean-spirited wretch!—What, do you suppose that those laws could be levelled against people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any set of men would submit to lay legal restraints on *themselves*?—Absurd and preposterous!

Ser. Why, by their public practice, my love, one would suspect that they thought themselves exempted by a particular clause.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! to be sure; not the least doubt can be made.

Ser. True, chuck—But then your great friends should never complain of highwaymen stopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houses.

Mrs. Cir. Why, what has that to do with the business?

Ser. Oh! the natural consequence, lovee; for whilst the superiors are throwing away their fortunes, and consequently their independence *above* —you can't think but their domestics are following their example *below*.

Mrs. Cir. Well, and what then?

Ser. Then! the same distress that throws the master and mistress into the power of any who are willing to purchase them, by a regular gradation, seduces the servants to actions, though more *criminal*, perhaps not more *atrocious*.

Mrs. Cir. Pshaw! stuff!—I have no head to examine your dirty distinctions. Don't teaze me

with pour jargon.—I have told you the sums I shall want, so take care they are ready at your return from Kingston.—Nay, don't hesitate; recollect your own state of the case, and remember my honour is in pawn, and must, some way or other, be redeemed by the end of the week. [*Exit.*

Ser. (solus) My honour is in pawn!—Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words!—Formerly, *chastity* was the honour of women, and *good faith* and *integrity* the honour of men: but *now*, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her losses at play, and a gentleman who kills his best friend in some trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-top people of *honour*. Well, let them go on, it brings grist to our mill: for whilst both the sexes stick firm to their *honour*, we shall never want business, either at Doctors' Commons or the *Old Bailey*. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Enter SERGEANT CIRCUIT *and* JACK.

Ser. Jack, let Will bring the chaise to the door.

Jack. Mr. Fairplay, sir, the attorney, begs to speak a few words.

Ser. How often have I told you, that I will see none of those sort of folks but at chambers; you know how angry your mother is at their rapping, and littering the house,

Jack. He says, sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

Ser. Well, bid him walk in.

Enter FAIRPLAY.

Well, Mr. Fairplay, what's your will.

Fair. I just called, Mr. Sergeant, to know your opinion upon the case of young Woodford, and if you like the proposal of being concerned.

Ser. If it turns out as you state it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Essex estate may, without doubt, be recovered; and so may the lands in the north.

Fair. We have full proofs to that fact.

Ser. May be so; but really, Mr. Fairplay, you know the length of time that these kind of suits—

Fair. True, sir, but then your experience will shorten, I appreh——

Ser. That's more than I know: and then, not only my fees lying dormant, but, perhaps, an expectation of money advanced.

Fair. The property, sir, is of very great value, and, upon the recovery, any acknowledgement shall be readily made.

Ser. There again, *any!* do you know that, in law, that word *any* has no meaning at all? besides, when people are in distress, they are lavish enough of their offers; but, when their business is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

Fair. You have only to dictate your terms.

Ser. Does the lad live in town?

Fair. He has been under my care since the death of his father; I have given him as good an education as my narrow fortune would let me; he is now studying the law in the Temple, in hopes that, should he fail of other assistance, he may be able one day to do *himself* justice.

Ser. In the Temple?

Fair. Yes, sir, in those little chambers just over your head—I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

Jack. Who? Mr. Woodford! Lord as well as myself, he is a sweet sober youth, and will one day make a vast figure, I am sure.

Ser. Indeed!

Jack. I am positive, sir, if you were to hear him speak at the Robin-hood, in the Butcher-row, you would say so yourself: why he is now reckoned *the third;* except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawny Sinclair the snuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him.

Ser. Peace, puppy; well, Mr. Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me and—pray who is employed against you?

Fair. A city attorney, one Sheepskin.

Ser. A cunning fellow, I know him; well, sir, if you will call at Pump-court in a week.

Fair. I shall attend you.

Ser. Jack, open the door for Mr.——[*Exeunt* FAIRPLAY *and* JACK.] Something may be made of this matter; I'll see this Sheepskin myself. So much in future for carrying on the suit, or so much in hand to make it miscarry: a wise man should well weigh which party to take for.

Enter JACK.

So, Jack, any body at chambers to-day?

Jack. Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape against Will Vizard, this term.

Ser. Praying for an equal partition of plunder?

Jack. Yes, sir.

Ser. Strange world we live in, that even highwaymen can't be true to each other! [*half aside to himself.*] but we shall make Master Vizard refund, we will show him what long hands the law has.

Jack. Facias says, that in all the books he can't hit on the precedent.

Ser. Then I'll make one myself: *aut inveniam, aut faciam,* has been always my motto. The charge must be made for partnership-profit, by bartering lead and gunpowder against money, watches, and rings, on Epping-forest, Hounslow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

Jack. He says, if the court should get scent of the scheme, the parties would all stand committed.

Ser. Cowardly rascal! but however, the caution mayn't prove amiss. [*Aside.*] I'll not put my own name to the bill.

Jack. The declaration, too, is delivered in the cause of Roger Rapp'em against Sir Solomon Simple.

Ser. What, the affair of the note?

Jack. Yes.

Ser. Why, he is clear that his client never gave such a note.

Jack. Defendant never saw plaintiff since the hour he was born; but, notwithstanding, they have three witnesses to prove a consideration, and signing the note.

Ser. They have?

Jack. He is puzzled what plea to put in.

Ser. Three witnesses ready, you say?

Jack. Yes.

Ser. Tell him Simple must acknowledge the note, [JACK *starts,*] and bid him, against the trial comes on, to procure *four* persons at least to prove the payment, at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

Jack. But then, how comes the note to remain in plaintiff's possession?

Ser. Well put, Jack; but we have a *salvo* for that; plaintiff happened not to have the note in his pocket, but promised to deliver it up, when called thereunto by defendant.

Jack. That will do rarely.

Ser. Let the defence be a secret, for I see we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to lose time, have you carefully conned those instructions I gave you!

Jack. Yes, sir.

Ser. Well, that we shall see. How many points are the great object of practice?

Jack. Two.

Ser. Which are they?

Jack. The first is to put a man into possession of what is his right.

Ser. The second?

Jack. Either to deprive a man of what is *really* his *right*, or to keep him as long as possible *out* of possession.

Ser. Good boy! To gain the last end, what are the best means to be used?

Jack. Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

Ser. Name them.

Jack. Injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, essoigns, and imparlance.

Ser. [*To himself.*] Fine instruments in the hands of a man who knows how to use them.—But now, Jack, we come to the point: if an able advocate has his choice in a cause, (which if he is in reputation he may readily have,) which side should he choose, the right or the wrong?

Jack. A great lawyer's business, is always to make choice of the wrong.

Ser. And pry'thee why so?

Jack. Because a good cause can speak for itself, whilst a bad one demands an able counsellor to give it a colour.

Ser. Very well. But in what respects will this answer to the lawyer himself?

Jack. In a two-fold way; firstly, his fees will be large in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

Ser. Secondly?—

Jack. His reputation will rise, by obtaining the victory in a desperate cause.

Ser. Right, boy.—Are you ready in the case of the cow?

Jack. Pretty well, I believe.

Ser. Give it then.

Jack. First of April, anno seventeen hundred and blank, John a Nokes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for stealing a cow, *contra pacem et cet.*—and against the statute in that case provided and made, to prevent stealing of cattle.

Ser. Go on.

Jack. Said Nokes was convicted upon the said statute.

Ser. What followed thereupon?—

Jack. Motion in arrest of judgement, made by Counsellor Puzzle. First, because the field from whence the cow was conveyed is laid in the indictment as *round*, but turned out upon proof to be *square*.

Ser. That's well: a valid objection.

Jack. Secondly, because in said indictment the

colour of the cow is called red, there being no such things in *rerum natura* as red cows, no more than black lions, spread eagles, flying griffins, or blue boars.

Ser. Well put.

Jack. Thirdly, said Nokes has not offended against form of the statute; because stealing of *cattle* is there provided against: whereas we are only convicted of stealing *a cow*. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that a cow must be cattle.

Ser. Bravo, bravo! buss me, you rogue; you are your father's own son! go on, and prosper.—I am sorry, dear Jack, I must leave thee. If Providence but sends thee life and health, I prophesy, thou wilt wrest as much land from the owners, and save as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner since the days of King Alfred.

Jack. I'll do my endeavour. [*Exit* SERGEANT. So!—father is set off. Now, if I can but lay eyes on our Charlotte, just to deliver this letter, before madam comes home. There she is.—*Hist*, sister Charlotte!

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. What have you got there, Jack?

Jack. Something for you, sister.

Char. For me! Pr'ythee what is it?

Jack. A thing.

Char. What thing?

Jack. A thing that will please you, I'm sure.

Char. Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. [JACK *gives the letter.*] How is this! a letter! from whom?

Jack. Can't you guess?

Char. Not I; I don't know the hand.

Jack. May be not; but you know the indicter.

Char. Then tell me his name.

Jack. Break open the seal, and you'll find it.

Char. [*Opening the letter.*] "Charles Woodford!"—I am sure I know nothing of him.

Jack. Ay, but, sister, you do.

Char. How! when and where?

Jack. Don't you remember about three weeks ago, when you drank tea at our chambers, there was a young gentleman in a blue satin waistcoat, who wore his own head of hair.*

Char. Well?

Jack. That letter is from he.

Char. What can be his business with me?

Jack. Read that, and you'll know.

Char. (*reads.*) "Want words to apologize—hum, hum—very first moment I saw you—hum, hum—smothered long in my breast—hum, hum—happiest, or else the most wretched of men"—So, sir, you have undertaken a pretty commission! and what do you think my father will—

Jack. Why, I hope you wo'n't go for to tell him.

Char. Indeed, sir, but I shall.

Jack. No, sister, I'm sure you wo'n't be so cross. Besides, what could I do? The poor young lad begged so hard; and there, for this fortnight, he has gone about sighing, and musing, and moping: I am satisfied it would melt you to see

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* Will it not seem strange at this day, that plainness and juvenility should be mainly marked by a person's not wearing *a wig*?—a nasty fashion, that declined in ten years after.

him. Do, sister, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

Char. Upon my word!—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent; you are for pushing matters at once.—But hark-ye, sir, who is this spark you are so anxious about? And how long have you known him?

Jack. Oh! a prodigious long while: above a month I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel? I assure you he is vastly liked by the ladies.

Char. He is?

Jack. Yes, indeed. Mrs. Congo, at the Grecian coffee-house, says, he's the soberest youth that comes to the house; and all Mrs. Mittens's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the window every time he goes by.

Char. Upon my word!

Jack. And moreover, besides that, he has several great estates in the country; but only for the present, he is kept out of 'em all by the owners.

Char. Ah, Jack! that's the worst part of the story.

Jack. Pshaw! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr. Fairplay, has been with father to-day, and says, he is certain that he can get all to rights in a trice.

Char. Well, Jack, when that point is determined, it will be time enough to—

Jack. Then! Lord of mercy! why, sister Charlotte, it is my private opinion that if you don't give him some crumbs of comfort, he wo'n't live till Midsummer term.

Char. I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately deprived of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. How-

ever, Jack, you may tell your friend, that I have observed his frequent walks in our street.

Jack. Walks! why one should think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman; for no sooner one goes *off*, but the other comes *on*.

Char. And that, from his eyes being constantly fixed on my window (for the information of which, I presume he is indebted to you)——

Jack. He! he! he!

Char. I had a pretty shrewd guess at his business; but tell him that, unless my fa——Hush! our tyrant is returned. Don't leave the house till I see you.

Enter MRS. CIRCUIT *and* BETTY.

Mrs. Cir. So, sir, what makes you loitering from chambers? I thought I told you, you should never be here but at meals? [*Exit* JACK.] One spy is enough in a family. Miss, you may go to your room; and d'ye hear—I shall have company, so you need not comed own. [*Exit* CHARLOTTE.]—Betty, no message or letter?

Bet. None, madam.

Mrs. Cir. That is amazing! you know I expect Colonel Secret and Mrs. Simper every instant.

Bet. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Cir. Put the fruit and wine on the table in the next room.

Bet. Very well, madam.

Mrs. Cir. And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but Sir Luke.

Bet. Madam, I shall take care. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Cir. (sits down.) The *ballot* must be over by this time. Sure, there is nothing so dreadful as a suspense: but should they black-ball me!—No, there's no danger of that: Miss Mattadore has

insured me success. Well, this is certainly one of the most useful institutions; it positively supplies the only point of time one does not know how to employ, From twelve, the hour of one's rising, to dinner, is a most horrible chasm; for, though teazing the mercers and milliners, by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amusement, yet, upon repetition, it palls. But, every morning to be sure of a party, and then again at night after a rout, to have a place to retire to; to be quite freed from all pain of providing; not to be pestered at table with the odious company of clients and country cousins; for I am determined to dine, and sup at the club, every day. I can tell 'em, they'll have but very few forfeits from me.

Enter BETTY, *in haste, with a Letter.*

Bet. By a chairman, madam, from the Thatched-house.

Mrs. Cir. Give it me, Betty, this instant;—ay—this is Mattadore's hand. [*Opens and reads the letter.*] "My dear Circuit—it is with the utmost concern and confusion I find myself obliged to acquaint you, that, notwithstanding all the pains I have taken, the club have thought fit to reject"—Oh! [*she faints.*]

Bet. Bless my soul! my lady is gone! John! Will! Kitty! run hither this instant.

Enter Two Maids and a Man Servant.

All. What, what's the matter?

Bet. Quick! quick! some hartshorn and water [*puts her hand.*] Madam! madam—

Serv. Here! here! here! [*bringing water.*]

Bet. John, go for the *potter-carrier* this instant.—I *believes* to my soul she is dead—Kitty, fetch

some feathers to burn under her nose; there, stand further off, and give her some air—.

Enter SIR LUKE.

Sir Luke. Hey day! what the deuce is the matter? what's the meaning of all this, Mrs. Betty?

Bet. Oh! sir, is it you? my poor lady! [*cries*] clap the bottle hard to her nose.

Sir Luke. But how came it about?

Bet. Some of the *continents* of that cursed letter she has there in her hand.

Sir Luke. Here, here, take some of my *eau de luce.* [*offering a bottle.*]

Bet. There! she recovers a little—some water—I believe it is nothing but a *satirical* fit, I have had them myself—now she opens her eyes—so, so—bend her forward a little.

Sir Luke. My sweet Mrs. Circuit.

Mrs. Cir. Who is that?

Bet. Nobody at all madam, but only Sir Luke.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! Sir Luke, such a stroke, so fatal, so sudden, it is not in nature I should ever survive it.

Sir Luke. Marry, heaven forbid! but what cause—what could—

Mrs. Cir. Leave the room. [*To the Servants, who go out.*] Only look over that letter.

Sir Luke. Hum, hum,—[*reads*] "fit to reject you—this—

Mrs. Cir. There! there! there!

Sir Luke. I own this is the utmost malice of fortune—but let me finish the letter. "This calamity, dear Circuit, is of such a nature as baffles all advice or interposition of friends, I shall, therefore, leave you to time, and your own good understanding." [*pretty and sensible.*] yours," &c. But let

us see, what says the postscript—[*reads.*] "Perhaps it may give you some comfort to know that you had sixteen almonds, and but two *raisins* against you.

Mrs. Cir. But two!

Sir Luke. No more.

Mrs. Cir. This must be Kitty Cribbage's doing, she has been tattling about the paltry trifle I owe her.

Sir Luke. Not unlikely: but come, bear up, my dear madam, and consider that *two*—

Mrs. Cir. Is as bad as two thousand.

Sir Luke. Granted; but perhaps it may not be too late to repair. Gadso! I have thought of a scheme—I'll be elected myself, and then I warrant we manage—

Mrs. Cir. You, Sir Luke? that never can be.

Sir Luke. No, madam, and why not? why, you don't suppose that they would venture to—

Mrs. Cir. It would not only be against the spirit, but the very letter of their constitution to choose you a member.

Sir Luke. Ay, madam, how so?

Mrs. Cir. Their statutes are selected from all the codes that ever existed from the days of Lycurgus to the present *Czarina.*

Sir Luke. Well.

Mrs. Cir. The law that relates to your case they have borrowed from the Roman religion.

Sir Luke. As how?

Mrs. Cir. As no man can be admitted a monk who has the least corporal spot or defect; so, no candidate can be received as a member who is deprived of the use of any one of his limbs.

Sir Luke. Nay, then, indeed, I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs. Cir. Indeed, the Sergeant says, if the club could be induced to *resolve* in your favour, then the *original law* would signify nothing.

Sir Luke. Well, well, we'll see what can be done. [*A loud knocking.*] But hush! the company's come; collect yourself, sweet Mrs. Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious pleasure of seeing how this disappointment affects you.

Mrs. Cir. Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter COLONEL SECRET *and* MRS. SIMPER.

Mrs. Sim. Your servant, Sir Luke; my dear Circuit, I am frightened to death—your people tell me you are but just recovered from a——

Mrs. Cir. Oh! nothing at all! a faintness, a kind of swimming—but those people are ever swelling mole-hills to mountains.

Mrs. Sim. I protest I was afraid that you had suffered your late disappointment to lay hold of your spirits.

Mrs. Cir. What disappointment, my dear?

Col. Mrs. Simper hints at the little mistake made this morning at the Thatched-house.

Mrs. Cir. That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child—all my own doing.

Mrs. Sim. How!

Sir Luke. Entirely.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! I always detested the thoughts of the thing; they would put me up, let me say what I would, so I was reduced to the necessity of prevailing upon two of my friends to *black ball* me.

Mrs. Sim. That, indeed, alters the case.

Col. I am vastly happy to hear it; your old acquaintance were afraid they should lose you.

Mrs. Cir. It is a sign they know but little of me—but come, my good folks, I have prepared a small collation in the next room, will you——

[*Exeunt.*

Enter JACK *and* WOODFORD.

Jack. I'll watch sister, to see that nobody comes; now, Woodford, make good use of your time. [*Exit* WOODFORD.] There, I have left 'em together; if I had staid, I don't believe they would have opened their mouths for a month: I never saw such an alteration in a lad since the day I was born. Why, if I had not known him before, I should not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb:

True lovers are shy,
When people are by.

I'll take a peep to see how they go on: there they are, just in the same posture I left them; she folding her fingers; and he twirling his hat; why, they don't even look at each other: was there ever such a couple of—stay, stay, now he opens his mouth—pshaw!—lord! there he shuts it again—hush! I hear somebody coming—no—nothing at all:—mother is safe, I am sure,—there is no danger from her—now let us take t'other—[*peeps at the door.*] hum! gadso, matters are mightily mended—there! there! very well—there he lays down the law—now he claps his hand on his heart—vastly pretty, I vow—there he swops with both his knees on the ground—charming!—and squeezes his hat with both hands, like one of the actors—delightful! she wants him to rise, and he won't—prodigious moving indeed!

Enter BETTY.

Bet. So, sir, what are you doing there?

Jack. There! where?

Bet. With your eyes glued close to the key-hole.

Jack. I wanted to speak a word to my sister.

Bet. Then, why don't you open her door?

Jack. I did not know but she might be saying her prayers.

Bet. Prayers! a likely story! Who says their prayers at this time of the day?—No, no, that wo'n't pass upon me.—Let me look—very pretty! So, so, I see there's somebody else at his prayers too—fine doings!—As soon as the company goes, I shall take care to inform madam your mother.

Jack. Nay, but, Mrs. Betty, you wo'n't be so—

Bet. Indeed, Mr. John, but I shall—*I'll* swallow none of your secrets, believe me.

Jack. What, perhaps your stomach is overloaded already.

Bet. No matter for that, I shall be even with miss, for telling master about and concerning my *drums*.

Jack. Why, Mrs. Betty, surely sister could not—

Bet. When she very well knows that I have not sent cards but twice the whole season.

Jack. Lord! what signi——

Bet. What would she say, if she visited the great families I do? For though I am, as I may say, but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman has a more prettier set of acquaintance.

Jack. Well, but—

Bet. My routs, indeed!—There is Mrs. Allspice,

who lives with Lady Cicely Sequence, has six tables every Sunday, besides loosers and braggers; and moreover purposes giving a masquerade, the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

Jack. Well, but to talk calmly.

Bet. And, as miss is so fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourselves, as the quality have: the *Distrustful* Mother, 'tis call'd—Pylades, by Mr. Thomas, Lord Catastrophe's butler—Hermione, Mrs. Allspice; and I shall do Andromache myself.

Jack. A play! lord, Mrs. Betty, will you give me a ticket?

Bet. All's one for that—and so you may tell miss that—[*bell rings*]—coming, madam, this minute—and that, Mr. John, is the long and the short on't. [*Bell rings again.*] Lord! I am coming. [*Exit.*

Enter WOODFORD *to* JACK.

Wood. What's the matter?

Jack. Here, Betty, my mother's fac-totum, has just discovered your haunts, and is gone to lay an information against you—so depend upon it, a search-warrant will issue directly.

Wood. Stay but a moment, till I take leave of your sister.

Jack. Zooks! I tell you the constables will be here in a trice, so you have not a moment to lose.

Wood. How unlucky this is!

Jack. But I hope you have obtained a verdict, however?

Wood. No.

Jack. No!

Wood. It would not have been decent to have pressed the judge too soon for a sentence.

Jack. Soon!—You are a ninny; I tell you so:—here, you will suffer judgement to go by default.—You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

Wood. This, you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity case; I have but just filed my bill; one must give the parties time to put in an answer.

Jack. Time!—How you may come off in court I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber-counsel I fear.—Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure another hearing before it is—but lord o'mercy! there is father crossing the hall—should he see us, all's over—we have nothing for't but taking shelter with sister.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SIR LUKE LIMP, MRS. CIRCUIT, COLONEL SECRET, *and* MRS. SIMPER, *discovered at a Table, with a Collation before them.*

Mrs. Cir. Oh! by the by, Sir Luke—take some of these sweetmeats, my dear, [*to Mrs.* SIMPER]—did not you promise to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera?—Colonel, wo'n't you taste the champaign?

Sir Luke. Who, Signior *Piano?*—Let me assist, Mrs. Simper.—Why, madam, I made an attempt; but at present—sha'n't I send you a biscuit?—he is in the possession of a certain lady, who never suffers him out of her sight for a moment.

Mrs. Sim. Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vastly fond of these custards.

Sir Luke. Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but he promised, if possible, to escape for an hour—wo'n't you? [*to Mrs.* CIRCUIT.]

Mrs. Cir. No, it gives me the heart-burn.—Then let us leave him a cover.

Col. By all means in the world.

Mrs Cir. But there is, likewise, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs. Sim. Another! who can that be, I wonder?

Mrs. Cir. A small appendix of mine.

Sir Luke. How, madam!

Mrs. Cir. You need not be jealous, Sir Luke—taste that tart, Mrs. Simper—it is only my husband, the Sergeant.—Ha! ha! ha!—Betty makes them herself.

Mrs. Sim. Oh! you abominable creature! How could such a thought come into your head?

Sir Luke. Ma'am—[*Offering sweetmeats to Mrs.* SIMPER.]

Mrs. Sim. Not a bit more, I thank you.—I swear and vow I should swoon at the sight.

Mrs. Cir. And I should receive him with the polite indifference of an absolute stranger.

Sir Luke. Well said, my good Lady Intrepid! But, notwithstanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you such an electrical shock——

Mrs Cir. You are vastly deceived.

Sir Luke. Dare you to come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr. Sergeant? He is not far off.

Mrs. Cir. What, my husband?

Sir Luke. Even he! I saw him as I entered the hall.

Mrs. Cir. Impossible!

46615.

Sir Luke. Nay, then I must fetch him.

[*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Col. I can't conceive what the knight would be at.

Mrs. Sim. Why, he is mad.

Mrs. Cir. Or turned fool.

Enter SIR LUKE, *with the* SERGEANT'S *Peruke on a Block.*

Sir Luke. Now, madam, have I reason? Is this your husband or not?

Mrs. Sim. It is he; not the least doubt can be made.

Col. Yes, yes, it is the Sergeant himself.

Mrs. Cir. I own it; I acknowledge the lord of my wishes. [*Kisses the Block.*]

Mrs. Sim. All his features are there!

Col. The grave cast of his countenance!

Sir Luke. The vacant stare of his eye!

Mrs. Cir. The livid hue of his lips!

Mrs. Sim. The rubies with which his cheeks are enriched!

Col. The silent solemnity when he sits on the bench!

Mrs. Cir. We must have him at table; but, pray, good folks, let my husband appear like himself. I'll run for the gown. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sim. By all means in the world.

Sir Luke. Despatch, I beseech you.

Mrs. CIRCUIT *returns with a gown and band.*

Mrs. Cir. Sir Luke, lend your assistance.

Col. There, place him at the head of the table.

[*They fix the head at the back of a chair, and place it at table; then all sit.*

Mrs. Sim. Madam, you'll take care of your husband.

Mrs. Cir. I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs. Sim. Oh, madam! I know that very well.

Sir Luke. Come, Hob or Nob, Master Circuit —let us try if we can't fuddle the Sergeant.

Col. O! fy! have a proper respect for the coif.

Mrs. Sim. Don't be too facetious, Sir Luke: it is not quite so safe to sport with the heads of the law! you don't know how soon you may have a little business together.

Sir Luke. But come, the Sergeant is sulky.—I have thought of a way to divert him:—You know he is never so happy as when he is hearing a cause; suppose we were to plead one before him; Mrs. Circuit and I to be counsel, the Colonel the clerk, and Mrs. Simper the cryer.

Mrs. Cir. The finest thought in the world! And stay, to conduct the trial with proper solemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe; we shall there be able to equip ourselves with suitable dresses.

Sir Luke. Allons, allons!

Mrs. Sim. There is no time to be lost.

[*All rise.*

Mrs. Cir. [*Stopping short as they are going out*] But wo'n't my husband be angry, if we leave him alone? By, dearee—we shall soon return to thee again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SERGEANT CIRCUIT, *not perceiving the Collation.*

Ser. So, my lord now being able to sit, there was no occasion for me.—I can't put that girl's nonsense out of my head—My wife is young, to be sure, and loves pleasure, I own; but, as to the *main* article, I have not the least ground to suspect her in that—No, no!—And then, Sir

Luke! my *prosien ami*, the dearest friend I have in the—Heyday! [*seeing the collation*] what the deuce have we here?—A collation!—So, so—I see madam knows how to divert herself during my absence. What's this? [*seeing the block*] Oh, ho! ha! ha! ha! Well, that's pretty enough, I protest. Poor girl, I see she could not be happy without having something at table that resembled me. How pleased she will be to find me here *in propria persona*. By your leave, Mrs. Circuit—[*sits down and eats.*] Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine [*drinks*] Champaign as I live—must have t'other glass—they little think how that gentleman there regales himself in their absence—Ha! ha! ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me—Come, brother Coif, here's your health [*drinks*] I must pledge myself, I believe [*drinks again*] devilish strong—pshut! somebody's coming [*gets up and goes towards the wings*] what do I see? four lawyers! what the devil can be the meaning of this? I should be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! by your leave, brother Serjeant—I must crave the use of your robe [*sits down, and gets under the gown*]. Between ourselves, this is not the first time this gown has covered a fraud.

Enter SIR LUKE, COLONEL, MRS. CIRCUIT, *and* MRS. SIMPER, *dressed as counsellors.*

Sir Luke. Come, come, gentlemen, despatch; the court has been waiting some time. Brother Circuit, you have looked over your brief?

Mrs. Cir. What, do you suppose, sir, that like some of our brethren I defer that till I come into court? No, no.

Sir Luke. This cause contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs. Cir. One should think, Sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir Luke. Child, I was some years in the Temple; but the death of my brother robbed the robe of my labours.

Mrs. Sim. What a loss to the public?

Sir Luke. You are smart, Mrs. Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Snuffle, whose manner I studied, pronounced me a promising youth.

Mrs. Sim. I don't doubt it.

Sir Luke. But let us to business. And first, for the state of the case: the parties, you know, are Hobson and Nobson; the object of litigation is a small parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs. Cir. True; called Turnbury-mead.

Sir Luke. Very well. Then, to bring matters to a short issue, it was agreed, that Nobson should, on the premises, cut down a tree, and Hobson bring his action of damages.

Mrs. Cir. True, true.

Sir Luke. The jury being sworn, and the counsellors feed, the court may proceed. Take your seats—But hold—I hope no gentleman has been *touched* on both sides.

All. Oh! fy!

Sir Luke. Let silence be called.

Mrs. Sim. Silence in the court!

Sir Luke: But stop. To be regular, and provide for fresh causes, we must take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but stick fast to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

All. True, true.

Sir Luke. Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs. Cir. Gentlemen of the jury,—I am in this cause counsel for Hobson, the plaintiff. The action is brought against Nebuchadonezer Nobson, that he the said Nobson did cut down a tree, value two-pence, and to his own use said tree did convert. Nobson justifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, first state the probable evidence, and then come to the positive: and first as to the probable. When was this tree here belonging to Hobson, and claimed by Nobson, cut down? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the sun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on?—No; it was cut down privately, in the night, in a dark night, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see. Hum—And then with respect and regard to this tree, I am instructed to say, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the spot where it grew. Now, can it be thought, that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree? Certainly not. And again, gentlemen, we moreover insist, that this tree was not only ornamental to the spot where it grew, but it was a useful tree to the owner: it was a plum-tree, and not only a plum-tree, but I am authorized to say the best of plum-trees, it was a damsin plum. Now, can it be thought, that any man would come for to go, in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree; which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a useful tree; and not only a useful tree, but a plum-tree; and not only a plum-tree, but the best of plum-trees, a damsin plum? Most assuredly not. If so be, then

that this be so, and so it most certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full costs of suits, in such a manner and so forth, as may nevertheless appear notwithstanding.

Sir Luke. Have you done, Mr. Sergeant?

Mrs. Cir. You may proceed.

Sir Luke. Gentlemen of the jury,—I am in this cause counsel for Hob—Zounds! I think the head moves.

All. Hey!

Col. No, no, Mrs. Simper jogged the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir Luke. For Hercules Hobson—(I could have sworn it had stirred)—I sha'n't, gentlemen, upon this occasion, attempt to move your passions, by flowing periods, and rhetorical flowers, as Mr. Sergeant has done; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way through your heads, however thick they may be—in order to which, I will pursue the learned gentleman through what he calls his probable proofs; and first, as to this tree's being cut down in the night; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr. Sergeant; no, quite the reverse, we can prove that the moon shone bright, with uncommon lustre that night—So that, if so be, as how people did not see, that was none —[SERGEANT *sneezes.*] nay, Mrs. Circuit, if you break the thread of my—

Mrs. Cir. Me break!—I said nothing I'm sure.

Sir Luke. That's true, but you sneezed.

Mrs. Cir. Not I.

Sir Luke. I am sure somebody did; it could not be the head—consider, the least interruption puts one out of one's—None of our faults, they

might have looked on and seen if they would. And then, as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr. Sergeant has ornamented his spot—No, gentlemen, no such matter at all; I am instructed to say quite the reverse; a stunted tree, a blighted, blasted tree; a tree not only limbless, and leafless, but very near lifeless; that was the true state of the tree: and then as to its use, we own it was a plum-tree, indeed, but not of the kind Mr. Sergeant sets forth, a damsin plum; our proofs say loudly a bull plum; but if so be and it had been a damsin plum, will any man go for to say, that a damsin plum is the best kind of plum? not a whit; I take upon me to say, it is not a noun substantive plum—with plenty of sugar it does pretty well, indeed, in a tart, but to eat it by itself, will Mr. Sergeant go to compare it with the queen mother, the padrigons—

Ser. [*appearing suddenly from under the gown*] The green-gages, or the orlines.

Mrs. Cir. As I live, 'tis my husband! [*Exeunt.*

Ser. Nay, Sir Luke, don't you run away too—give me a buss—since I was born, I never heard a finer reply; I am sorry I did not hear your argument out—but I could not resist.

Sir Luke. This I own was a little surprise—had you been long here, Mr. Sergeant?

Ser. But the instant you entered.

Sir Luke. So, then all is safe. [*Aside.*

Ser. But, come, wo'n't you refresh you, Sir Luke—you have had hard duty to day.

Sir Luke. I drank very freely at table.

Ser. Nay, for the matter of that, I ha'n't been idle; [*both drink.*] But, come, throw off your gown, and let us finish the bottle: I ha'n't had such a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir Luke. Nay, then, Mr. Sergeant, have at you—come, here's long life and health to the law. [*Drinks.*]

Ser. I'll pledge that toast in a bumper.—[*Drinks.*]—I'll take Charlotte's hint, and see if I can't draw the truth out of the Knight by a bottle. [*Aside.*]

Sir Luke. I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of him that way. [*Aside.*]

Ser. I could not have thought it: why, where the deuce did you pick up all this? But, by the by, pray who was the cryer?

Sir Luke. Did not you know her? Mrs. Simper, your neighbour.

Ser. A pestilent jade! she's a good one I warrant.

Sir Luke. She is thought very pretty; what say you to a glass in her favour?

Ser. By all means in the world! [*they drink.*] And that spark, the clerk?

Sir Luke. Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you toasted.

Ser. A friend! oh, ay—I understand you—come, let us join 'em together.

Sir Luke. Allons. [*drink.*] Egad, I shall be caught in my own trap, I begin to feel myself flustered already. [*Aside.*]

Ser. Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glass. [*Sings.*]

Drink and drive care away,
Drink, drink and be merry.

Sir Luke. True, my dear Sergeant—this is the searcher of secrets—the only key to the heart.

Ser. Right boy, *in vino veritas.*

Sir Luke. No deceit in a bumper. [*Sings.*] Drink and be merry.

Ser. Merry? damme, what a sweet fellow you are; what would I give to be half so jolly and gay.

Sir Luke. [*Appearing very drunk.*] Would you? and yet, do you know, Sergeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing has popped into my head, that distresses me very much.

Ser. Then drive it out with a bumper. [*Drink.*] Well, how is it now?

Sir Luke. Now!—the matter is not mended at all.

Ser. What the deuce is the business that so sticks in your stomach?

Sir Luke. You know, my dear Sergeant, I am your friend; your real, your affectionate friend.

Ser. I believe it, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. And yet, for these six months, I have concealed a secret, that touches you near, very near—

Ser. Me near! That was wrong, very wrong; friends should have all things in common.

Sir Luke. That's what I said to myself: Sir Luke, says I, open your heart to your friend; but to tell you the truth, what sealed up my lips was the fear that this secret should make you sulky and sad.

Ser. Me sulky and sad! ha! ha! how little you know of me.

Sir Luke. Swear then that you wo'n't be uneasy.

Ser. Well, I do.

Sir Luke. [*Rising.*] Soft! let us see that all's safe;—well, Mr. Sergeant, do you know that you are—a fine, honest fellow?

Ser. Is that such a secret

Sir Luke. Be quiet; [illegible] fellow, but as to your wife—

Ser. Well?

Sir Luke. She is an infamous strum—

Ser. How! it is a falsehood; Sir Luke, my wife is as virtuous a wom—

Sir Luke. Oh! if you are angry, your servant—I thought that the news would have pleased you—for, after all, what is the business to me? What do I get by the bargain?

Ser. That's true; but then, would it not vex any man to hear his wife abused in such a—

Sir Luke. Not if it's true, you old fool.

Ser. I say, it is false: prove it; give me that satisfaction, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Oh! you shall have that pleasure directly; and to come at once to the point—you remember, last New-year's day, how severely it froze.

Ser. I do recollect.

Sir Luke. Very well; we were all invited to dine at Alderman Inkle's.

Ser. Very right.

Sir Luke. Well, and I did not go: Mrs. Circuit made me dine here, in this house—was it my fault?

Ser. No, no, Sir Luke, no.

Sir Luke. At table says she—she said, I was the picture of you—was it my fault?

Ser. Well, and suppose you are; where's the mischief in that?

Sir Luke. Be quiet, I tell you;—then throwing her arms round my neck,—it is my husband himself I embrace, it is my little old man that I kiss!—for she has a prodigious affection for you at bottom—was it my fault?

Ser. But what is there serious in this, dost think I mind such trifles?

Sir Luke. Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—then throwing her Teresa aside—upon my soul, she is prodigious fine every where here—was it my fault?

Ser. My fault! my fault! I see no fault in all this.

Sir Luke. [*Hatching a cry.*] No! why then my dear friend, do you know that I was so unworthy, so profligate, so abandoned—as to—[*rises*] say no more, the business is done.

Ser. Ay, indeed!

Sir Luke. Oh! fact! there is not the least doubt of the matter; this is no *hear-say*, dy'e see, I was by all the while.

Ser. Very pretty! very fine upon my word.

Sir Luke. Was it my fault? what could I do? put yourself in my place; I must have been more or less than man to resist.

Ser. Your fault, Sir Luke, no, no—you did but your duty—but as to my wife—

Sir Luke. She's a diabolical fiend, I shall hate her as long as I live.

Ser. And I too.

Sir Luke. Only think of her forcing me, as it were, with a sword at my breast, to play you such a trick; you, my dear Sergeant, the best, truest friend I have in the world. [*Weeps.*

Ser. [*Weeping.*] Dry your tears, dear Sir Luke; I shall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence in trusting *me* with the secret—[*taking him forward.*] But, I think it might be as well kept from the rest of the world.

Sir Luke. My dear soul, do you think I would tell it to any mortal but *you?* No, no, not to my brother himself—You are the only man upon earth I would trust.

Ser. Ten thousand thanks, my dear friend! sure there is no comfort, no balsam in life like a friend —but I shall make madam Circuit remember—

Sir Luke. We neither of us ought to forgive her —were I you, I'd get a divorce.

Ser. So I will—provided you will promise not to marry her after.

Sir Luke. Me! I'll sooner be torn to pieces by wild horses—no, my dear friend, we will retire to my house in the country together, and there, in innocence and simplicity, feeding our pigs and pigeons, like Pyramus and Thisbe, we will live the paragons of the age.

Ser. Agreed; we will be the whole earth to each other; for, as Mr. *Shakespur* says,

"The friend thou hast and his adoption tried,
"Clasp to thy soul and quit the world beside."—

Sir Luke. Zounds, here comes madam Sergeant herself.

Enter MRS. CIRCUIT.

Mrs. Cir. So, gentlemen! a sweet *tête à tête* you have been holding—but I know it all, not a syllable you have said has been lost.

Sir Luke. Then I hope you have been well entertained, Mrs. Circuit?

Mrs. Cir. And you, you mean spirited, dastardly wretch, to lend a patient ear to his infamous, improbable tales, equally shameful both to you and me.

Ser. How, madam! have you the assurance—

Mrs. Cir. Yes, sir, the assurance that innocence gives; there is not a soul, I thank heaven that can lay the least soil, the least spot, on my

virtue; nor is there a man on earth, but yourself, would have sat and silently listened to the fictions and fables of this intemperate sot.

Ser. Why, to be sure, the knight is overtaken a little; very near drunk.

Sir Luke. I hope he believes it is a lie. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Cir. Do me instant justice on this defamer, this liar, or never more expect to see me in your house.

Ser. I begin to find out the fraud, this is all a flam of the knight's.

Mrs. Cir. I'll drive this instant to a friend of mine in the Commons, and see if no satisfaction can be had, for blasting the reputation of a woman like me—and hark you, sir, what inducement, what devil could prompt?—

Ser. Ay; what devil could prompt—

Sir Luke. Heyday!

Mrs. Cir. But I guess at your motive; you flattered yourself, that by marrying Charlotte, and discarding of me, you should engross all his affections, and—

Ser. True, true—stop, my life, let me come at him a little: hark you, *Mr. Knight*, I begin to discover that you are a very sad dog.

Sir Luke. Et tu Brute!

Ser. Brute!—you'll find I am not the brute you would have made me believe—I have considered both sides of the question.

Sir. Luke. Both sides of the question?

Ser. Both: if your story is true, you are a scoundrel to debauch the wife of your friend; and if it is false, you are an infamous liar.

Sir Luke. Well argued.

Ser. So, in both cases, get out of my house.

Sir Luke. Nay, but Sergeant—

Ser. Troop, I tell you, and never again enter these walls;—you have libelled my wife, and I will see you no more.

Sir Luke. Was there ever such a—

Ser. March! and as to my daughter, I would as soon marry her to a *forma pauperis* client.

[*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Mrs. Cir. Do you consider, Mr. Circuit, where you are pushing the fellow?—That chamber is Charlotte's.

Enter SIR LUKE, WOODFORD, CHARLOTTE, *and* JACK.

Sir Luke. Hey-day! Who the deuce have we here?—Pray walk in, my good folks—your servant, Miss Charlotte; your servant, Mr. What-d'ye-call-um.—Mr. Sergeant, you need not trouble yourself to cater for Miss; your family, you see, can provide for themselves.

Ser. Heyday! what the deuce is all this! Who are you, sir; and how came you here?

[*To* WOODFORD.

Jack. It was I, father, that brought him.

Ser. How, sirrah!

Sir Luke. Well said, my young limb of the law.

Jack. Come, let us have none o' your—though I brought Mr. Woodford, you could not persuade me to do the same office for you.—Father, never stir, if he did not make me the proffer, if I would let him into the house the night you was at Kingston, of a new pair of silk stockings, and to learn me a minuet.

Sir Luke. Me! I should never have got you to turn out your toes.

Jack. Ay, and moreover you made me push out

my chest, and do so with my fingers, as if I was taking two pinches of snuff.

Sir Luke. You see, Mr. Sergeant, what a fondness I have for every twig of your family.

Ser. I shall thank *you* hereafter—but from you, Charlotte, I expected other guess—

Char. When, sir, you hear this whole matter explained, you will acquit me, I am sure.

Wood. Indeed, sir, *I* am wholly to blame; my being here was as much a surprise upon Miss Charlotte as—

Ser. But now you are here, pray what's your business?

Jack. O! father, I can acquaint you with that:—he wanted me to bring a love-letter to Charlotte, so I told him he might bring it himself, for that I would not do any such thing for never so much, for fear of offending of you.

Ser. You mended the matter indeed—but after all, who, and what are you?

Jack. It's the young gentleman that lives over our heads, to whom Mr. Fairplay is guardian.

Ser. Who, Woodford?

Jack. The same.

Ser. And are you, young man, in a situation to think of a wife?

Wood. I am flattered, sir, that as *justice* is with me, I shall one day have no contemptible fortune to throw at her feet.

Ser. Justice is! What signifies justice?—Is the *law* with you, you fool?

Wood. With your help, sir, I should hope for their *union*, upon this occasion at least.

Ser. Well, sir, I shall re-consider your papers; and, if there are probable grounds, I may be induced to hear your proposals.

Wood. Nay, then, sir, the recovering my paternal possessions makes me anxious indeed.—Could I hope that the young lady's good wish would attend me?

Char. I have a father, and can have no will of my own.

Sir Luke. So, then, it seems poor Pilgarlick here is discarded at once.

Ser. Why, could you have the impudence, after what has happened, to hope that——

Mrs. Cir. He has given wonderful proofs of his modesty.

Sir Luke. Be quiet, Mrs. Circuit.—Come, good folks, I will set all matters to rights in a minute; and first, Mr. Sergeant, it becomes me to tell you, that I never intended to marry your daughter.

Ser. How! never!

Sir Luke. Never. She is a fine girl, I allow; but would it now, Mr. Sergeant, have been honest in me to have robbed the whole sex of my person, and confined my favours to her?

Ser. How!

Sir Luke. No! I was struck with the immorality of the thing; and therefore to make it impossible that you should ever give me your daughter, I invented the story I told you concerning Mrs. Circuit and me.

Ser. How!

Sir Luke. Truth, upon my honour.—Your wife there will tell you the whole was a lie.

Ser. Nay, then, indeed.—But with what face can I look up to my dear? I have injured her beyond the hopes of forgiveness.—Would you, lovee, but pass an act of oblivion—

Sir Luke. See me here, prostrate, to implore your clemency in behalf of my friend.

Mrs. Cir. Of that I can't determine directly. —But as you seem to have some sense of your guilt, I shall grant you a reprieve for the present; which contrition and amendment may, perhaps, in time swell into a pardon.

But if again offending you are caught,——

Ser.

Then let me suffer, dearee, as I ought.

THE

MAID OF BATH;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

REMARKS.

NEVER was satire more successfully applied to the foibles and crimes of mankind than that which pointed its shafts in *the Maid of Bath*. That it was justly pointed, its effects soon proved: reparation to the injured party, in the sum of £3000, is said to have followed or accompanied its representation; and although endeavours were long employed in suppressing the real names of both parties, no reason can exist why, as matter of history, we may not benefit by the events that have succeeded each other in slow, natural, and regular progression. As the real facts of the case were, of course, worked up to the height of dramatic fiction, the interest the reader might feel in contemplating the theatrical miser, *Flint*, would suffer no evaporation by being told that his real name was *Walter Long*; nor, by his knowing that the latter was neither half so ridiculous a character, nor quite so wicked as the dramatist had drawn his prototype.

Yet do we read in the preface to an edition of this play, published in 1794, twenty-three years after the first appearance of the Maid of Bath, a continuance of this endeavour to mislead, nowise compatible with veritable history, nor fulfilling the curiosity that is ever awake on such occasions. Mr. Thomas Bellamy, whose memory thus stands tinctured with foregoing his duty as a public writer —though a very amiable man—writes thus prettily: '& As the sithe of time has *swept away* the party from a world which still contains too many near

resemblances, it will answer no *candid* end to revive the real name, sufficiently exposed in its day, and pursue the cry of ridicule when its object is no more. May the living profit by the picture, contemplate its deformity, and if, in a collected moment, a likeness is apprehended [*recognized*] that may tinge the cheek of man and draw him from the monster, satire has attained its end, and society remains its debtor."

W. Long, Esq. lived thirteen years after being thus 'uncandidly *swept away*,' having died at Bath, February 2, 1807, aged 95; so that he must have been fifty-seven years of age at the time he made *honourable proposals* to a "mere baby," as Sir Christopher has it, (page 141) 'Rich. Squire Long' died a bachelor, worth nearly a quarter of a million sterling, the bulk of which he bequeathed to Miss Tilney Long, a minor, already the richest heiress in England. But she having subsequently married to one of the Wellesleys, this immense fortune was dissipated in a very few years, the stately palace of Wanstead was sold and rased, and she died, rather suddenly, near Richmond, in September, 1825. What a mortifying lesson does this sad catastrophe convey to the penurious and unworthy possessor of riches! which has cost him probably days and nights of anxiety to accumulate, and attracted the hate and enmity of mankind. From some very pretty stanzas, on the occasion, which appeared in the *Bath Herald*, I cannot refrain copying the *second*, as most apposite:

Sad and lone was thy course through this turbulent scene,
And deeply, oh deeply, thy lot we deplore:
Though Fortune supplied thee the wealth of a queen,
Thy fate was the fate of the wretched and poor.

The Linnets, mother and daughter, were intended for the young lady who at that time (1770) electrified the musical world at Bath, and captivated the men by her charms; and her mother a vulgar woman. The lady was the daughter of Linley, the composer, who secretly married Richard B. Sheridan, in a real trip to Calais, 1772, and afterwards in London, though coronets and fortunes lay at her feet. He fought twice to vindicate the tainted honour of his wife; and she proved a valuable assistant to him, in the double character of politician and dramatist, well worthy so much risk.

Complete success attended the representation of this lively piece in 1771, and it still finds readers in the closet, among those who can admire striking portraits of characters that live in all classes of society, and at all periods within memory; whilst those of *Fillup* and *Flint* are as strictly descriptive of *the local*, as any since attempted in the Scotch novels. *Sir Christopher Cripple* would be well represented by the croaking voice which is attributed to *Woodward*, by the satirist Churchill; as it was on a revival by our own *Joe Munden*. The Lady Catharines always abound at Bath, and the markets of modish life are tolerably well supplied with the species at every other place of resort throughout the Island empire.

PROLOGUE.

Written by MR. GARRICK,

Spoken by MR. FOOTE.

WHO but has read, if you have read at all,
Of one, they *Jack the Giant-killer* call?
He was a bold, stout, able-bodied man,
To clear the world of *fee, faw, fum,* his plan:
Whene'er a *monster* had within his power
A young and tender *virgin* to devour,
To cool his blood, *Jack,* like a skilful surgeon,
Bled well the *monster,* and releas'd the *virgin;*
Like the best doctors, did a method learn,
Of curing fevers never to return.
Mayn't I this *giant-killing* trade renew?
I have my *virgin* and my *monster* too.
Though I can't boast, like *Jack,* a list of slain,
I wield a lancet and can breathe a vein.
To his Herculean arm my nerves are weak,
He cleft his foes, I only make mine squeak:
As Indians wound their slaves to please the court,
I'll tickle mine, *great Sirs,* to make you sport.
To prove myself a humble imitator,
Giants are *vices,* and *Jack* stands for *satire:*
By tropes and figures, as it fancy suits,
Passions rise monsters, men sink down to brutes;

All talk and write in allegoric diction,
Court, city, town, and country run to fiction:
Each daily paper allegory teaches——
Placemen are *locusts*, and *contractors leeches:*
Nay, even '*Change-alley*, where no bard repairs,
Deals much in fiction to pass off their wares;
For, whence the roaring there?—from *bulls* and *bears!*
The gaming fools are *doves*, the *knaves* are *rooks*,*
'*Change-Alley* bankrupts waddle out—*lame ducks!*
But, ladies, blame not you your gaming spouses,
For you, as well as they, have *pigeon*-houses.
To change the figure—formerly I've been,
To straggling follies, only *whipper-in;*
By royal bounty rais'd, I mount the back
Of my own *hunter*, and I keep the *pack:*
Tally-ho!—a rank old *fox* we now pursue,
So strong the scent, you'll run him full in view:
If we can't kill such brutes in human shape,
Let's fright 'em, that your *chickens* may escape;
Rouse 'em, while o'er their tender prey they're grumbling,
And rub their gums at least to mar their mumbling.

* *Variation.* The gambling fools are *pigeons*, knaves are *rooks*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE	*Mr. Woodward.*
MR. FLINT	*Mr. Foote.*
MAJOR RACKET	*Mr. Aickin.*
BILLY BUTTON	*Mr. Weston.*
PETER POULTICE	*Mr. Fearon.*
FILLUP	*Mr. Davis.*
MYNHEER SOUR-CROUT	*Mr. Castle.*
MONS. DE JARSEY	*Mr. Loyd.*
JOHN	*Mr. Jacobs.*

WOMEN.

LADY CATHARINE COLDSTREAM	*Mrs. Fearon.*
MRS. LINNET	*Miss Platt.*
MISS LINNET	*Mrs. Jewell.*
MAID	*Mrs. Weston.*

Waiters, &c.

SCENE—Bath.

THE

MAID OF BATH.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Bear Inn at Bath.

Enter FILLUP.

Fil. WHY, John, Roger, Ralphy, Harry Buckle! what a-dickens are become of the lads? Can't you hire?—Zure, zure, these whelps are enow to make a man maz'd!

Enter several Waiters.

All. Coming, sir!

Fil. Coming! ay, zo be Christmas, I think. Where be'st thee gwain, boy? what, I reckon thee ca'st-not zee for thy eyes.—Here, take the candle, and light the gentlefolk in.

Enter JOHN.

John. Carry a couple of candles into the Daphne.

[*Exeunt Waiters.*

Fil. John, who is it be a come?

John. Major Rackett, in a chay and four, from the Devizes.

Fil. What, the young youth, that last zeason carried away wi un Mrs. Muzleneses prentice?

John. Miss Patty Prim, from the Grove?

Fil. Ay, zure: thee dost know her well enow.

John. The same.

Fil. Zure and zure, then we shall have old doings by and by; he is a deadly wild spark, thee dost know.

John. But as good a customer as comes to the Bear.

Fil. That's zure enough: then why dost not run and light un in? Stay! gee I the candle; I wool go and light un in myself. [*Exit.*

Rack. [*without.*] Give the post-boys half-a-guinea between 'em.

John. Ay, there is some life in this chap! These are your guests that give spirit to Bath: your paralytical people, that come down to be parboiled and pumped upon, do no good that I know to the town, unless, indeed, to the physical tribe. How I hate to see an old fellow hobble into the house, with his feet wrapt in flannel, pushing forth his fingers like the hands at a cross, to point out the different roads on a common!—Hush!

Enter RACKET *and* FILLUP.

Fil. I hope, mester, you do zee your way: there be two steps; that you do know. Well, zure, I be heartily glad to zee your honour at Bath.

Rack. I thank you, my honest friend Fillup.—What, have you many people in town?

Fil. There ben't a power, please your honour,

at present. Some zick folk that do no zort of zarvis, and a few layers that be com'd off a the zircuit, that's all.

Rack. Birds of passage, ha, Fillup?

John. True, sir; for, at the beginning of term, when the woodcocks come in, the others fly off.

Rack. Are you there, honest Jack?

John. And happy to see your honour in town.

Rack. Well, master Fillup, and how go you on? any clubs fixed as yet?

Fil. No, zir, not to zay fixed; there be parson Pulruddock, from the Land's End, Master Evan Thomas, a Welsh attorney, two Bristol men, and a few port-drinking people, that dine every day in the Lion; the claret-club ben't expected down till the end of next week.

Rack. Any body in the house that I know?

Fil. Yes, zure: behind the bar there be Sir Christopher Cripple, fresh out of a fit of the gout, drinking a drop of punch along wy Mester Peter Poultice, the potter-carrier on the Parade.

Rack. The living Gazettes of Bath; the very men I want. Give my compliments to the gentlemen, and tell them I should be glad of their company. But, perhaps it may be troublesome for Sir Christopher——

Fil. No, no, not at all; at present he's a little tender, for zure; but I warrant un he'll make a shift to hobble into the room. [*Exit.*

Rack. Well, Jack, and how fares it with you? You have throve, I hope, since I saw you?

John. Throve? no, no, sir: your honour knows that during the summer, taverns and turnspits have but little to do at Bath.*

* *Turnspits*—A race of short-legged dog they placed in a box aloft, effected the rotatory motion.

Rack. True. But what is become of your colleague, honest Ned? I hope he has not quitted his place.

John. The share he had in your honour's intrigue with Miss Prim soon made this city too hot for poor Ned.

Rack. Then, why did not the fool go to London with me? The fellow has humour, spirit, and sings a good song. I intended to have recommended him to one of the theatres.

John. Why, sir, Ned, himself, had a bias that way; but his uncle, Alderman Surcingle the saddler, a piece of a Puritan, would not give his consent.

Rack. Why not?

John. He was afraid that kind of life might corrupt or endanger Ned's morals, so he has set him up in a bagnio at the end of Long-Acre.

Rack. Nay, if the fellow fails after such a security——

Sir Chr. [*without.*] At what a rate the rascal is running! Zounds, I believe the fellow thinks I can foot it as fast as Eclipse! Slower, and be——

Enter SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE *and* FILLUP, *followed by* PETER POULTICE.

Where is this rakehelly, rantipole?—Jack, set me a chair.—So, sir! you must possess a good share of assurance to return to this town, after the tricks you have played.—Fillup, fetch in the punch!—Well, you ungracious young dog, and what is become of the poor wench? Ah, poor Patty! and here, too, my reputation is ruined as well as the girl's.

Rack. Your reputation? that's a good jest!

Sir Chr. Yes, sirrah, it is; and all owing to my

acquaintance with you: I, forsooth, am called your adviser; as if your own contriving head and profligate heart stood in need of any assistance from me.

Rack. Well, but, dear Sir Kit, how can this idle stuff affect you?

Sir Chr. How? easy enough: I will be judged now by Poultice.—Peter, speak truth! before this here blot in my escutcheon, have not you observed, when I went to either a ball or a breakfasting, how eagerly all the girls gathered round me, gibing, and joking, and giggling! gad take me, as facetious and free as if I were their father?

Poul. Nothing but truth.

Fil. That's truth, to my zertain knowledge; for I have zeen the women-folk tittering, 'till they were ready to break their zides, when your honour was throwing your double tenders about.

Sir Chr. True, honest Fillup.—Before your curs'd affair, neither maid, widow, or wife was ashamed of conversing with me; but now, when I am wheeled into the room, not a soul under seventy will venture within ten yards of my chair: I am shunn'd worse than a leper in the days of King Lud;* an absolute hermit in the midst of a crowd! Speak, Fillup, is not this a melancholy truth?

Fil. Very mollycolly, zure!

Sir Chr. But this is not all; the crop-eared curs of the city have taken it into their empty heads to neglect me. Formerly, Mr. Mayor could not

* More probably *Bladud* the fabulated *Numa* of *Bath*, whose daughter being a leper, washed and obtained a cure in the hot waters there.

devour a custard, but I received a civil card to partake; but now, the rude rascals, in their bushy bobs, brush by me without designing to bow! in short, I do not believe I have had a corporation crust in my mouth for these six months. You might as well expect a minister of state at the Mansion-house, as see me at one of their feasts—

Fil. His honour tell'th nothing but truth.

Sir Chr. So that I am almost famished, as well as forsaken.

Fil. Quite famished, as a body may zay, mester.

Sir Chr. Oh, Tom, Tom, you have been a cursed acquaintance to me! what a number of fine turtles and fat haunches of venison has your wickedness lost me!

Rack. My dear Sir Kit, for this I merit your thanks: how often Dr. Carawitchet has told you rich food and *champ*agne would produce you nothing but poor health and *real* pain!*

Sir Chr. What signifies the prattle of such a punning puppy as he? what, I suppose, you would starve me, you scoundrel! When I am got out of one fit, how the devil am I to gather strength to encounter the next? Do you think it is to be done by sipping and slopping? [*drinks.*] But no matter! Look you, major Racket, all between us is now at an end; and, sir, I should consider it as a particular favour if you would take no further notice of me: I sincerely desire to drop your acquaintance; and, as to myself, I am fixed, positively fixed, to reform.

* A pun which was revived in 1793, when Tom Paine dominated, by way of toast: "Real Paine to our sham friends, and *Champ*agne to our real friends."

Rack. Reform? Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chr. Reform! and why not? Well! you shall see! the whole city shall see! As soon as ever I get to my lodgings, I will send for Luke Lattitat and Codicil, and make a handsome bequest to the hospital.

Rack. Stuff!

Sir Chr. Then I am resolved to be carried every day to the twelve o'clock prayers, at the Abbey, and regularly twice of a Sunday.

Rack. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chr. Ha, ha, ha! you may laugh; but I'll be damn'd if I don't! and if all this don't recover my credit, I am determined, besides, to hire a house in Harlequin-row, and be a constant hearer at the Countess's chapel——

Rack. And so, perhaps, turn out a field-preacher in time.

Sir Chr. I don't know but I may.

Rack. Well then, my dear Sir Christopher, adieu! But, if we must part, let us part as friends should; not with dry lips and in anger. Fillup, take care of the knight. [FILLUP *fills the glasses.*] Well, faith, my old crony, I can't say but I am heartily sorry to lose you; many a brave batch have we broached in our time.

Sir Chr. True, Tom, true.

Rack. Don't you remember the bout we had at the Tuns, in the days of Plump Jack? I shall never forget! After you had felled poor Falstaff with a pint bumper of Burgundy, how you bestrode the prostrate hero, and in his own manner cried, "Crown me, ye spirits, that delight in gen'rous wine!"

Sir Chr. Vanity, mere vanity, Tom, nothing but vanity!

Rack. And then another day at the—But replenish, Fillup! the bowl is not empty?

Sir Chr. Enough, enough!

Rack. What, don't flinch, man? it is but to finish the bowl.—Come, Sir Christopher, one tender squeeze!

Sir Chr. Take care of my hand! none of your old tricks, you young dog.

Rack. Gentle as the lick of a lap-dog; here!—What o'clock is it, Fillup?

Fil. I'll tell you, mester [*looks at his watch.*] Just turned a six.

Rack. So soon? Hang it, Sir Kit, it is too early to part: come, what say you to one supper more? but one, by way of sacrifice to the sacred feelings of friendship? Honest Fillup knows your taste; he will toss you up a——

Sir Chr. Not a morsel, Tom, if you would give me the universe!

Rack. Pho, man! only a sandwich or so.—Fillup, what hast got in the house?

Fil. A vamous John Dorey, two pair of soals, and there be a joint of Lansdown mutton; and then, you do know, my Molly be vamous in making marrow-puddings.

Rack. A fine bill of fare.—Come, knight, what do you choose?

Sir Chr. Me! why, you seem to have forgot what I told you just now.

Rack. Your design to reform? not at all; and I think you quite right; perfectly so, as I hope to be saved: but what needs all this hurry? to-morrow is a new day; it will then be early enough. Fillup, send us in just what you will.

Sir Chr. You are a coaxing, cajoling young dog.—Well, if it must be so, Fillup, it must. Fillup, get me an anchovy-toast; and do you

hear? a red herring or two, for my stomach is damnably weak.

Fil. I shall to be zure, zur. [*Exit.*

Rack. So! that's settled.—Now, Poultice! Come forward.—Well, my blades, and what news have you got stirring amongst you?

Poul. Except a little run of sore throats about the beginning of autumn, and a few feeble fellows that dropt off with the leaves in October, the town is in tolerable——

Rack. Pox of the dead and the dying! but what amusements have you got for the living?

Poul. There is the new playhouse, you know.

Rack. True: but as to the musical world; what hopes have we there? any of the opera people among you? Apropos—what is become of my little flame, *La petite Rosignole,* the lively little Linnet? is she still——

Sir Chr. Lost, totally lost!

Rack. Lost! what, left you? I am sorry for that.

Sir Chr. Worse, worse!

Rack. I hope she a'n't dead.

Sir Chr. Ten thousand times worse than all that!

Rack. How the deuce can that be?

Sir Chr. Just going to be buried alive—to be married.

Rack. Pho! is that all? The ceremony was, indeed, formerly looked upon as a kind of metaphorical grave; but the system is changed, and marriage is now considered as an entrance to a new and better kind of life.

Sir Chr. Indeed!

Rack. Pshaw! who talks now of the drudgery of domestic duties, of nuptial chains, and of bonds? mere obsolete words! they did well enough in

the dull days of queen Bess; but a modern lass puts on fetters to enjoy the more freedom, and pledges her faith to one, that she may be at liberty to bestow her favours on all.

Sir Chr. What vast improvements are daily made in our morals! what an unfortunate dog am I, to come into the world at least half a century too soon! what would I give to be born twenty years hence! there will be damned fine doings then! hey, Tom? But, I'm afraid our poor little girl won't have it in her power to profit by these prodigious improvements.

Rack. Why not?

Sir Chr. Oh, when you once hear the name of her partner——

Rack. Who is it?

Sir Chr. An acquaintance of yours: only that old fusty, shabby, shuffling, money-loving, water-drinking, mirth-marring, amorous old hunks, Master Solomon Flint.

Rack. He that enjoys—owns, I mean—half the farms in the country?

Sir Chr. He, even he.

Rack. Why, he is sixty at least; what a filthy old goat! But then, how does this design suit with his avarice? the girl has no fortune.

Sir Chr. No more than what her talents will give her.

Rack. Why, the poltroon does not mean to profit by them?

Sir Chr. Perhaps, if his family should chance to increase: but I believe his main motive is the hopes of an heir.

Rack. For which he must be indebted to some of his neighbours: in that point of light, the matter is not so much amiss. It is impossible she

can be fond of the fellow; and it is very hard, with the opportunities this place will afford, if in less than a month, I don't——

Sir Chr. This place! why, you don't suppose he'll trust her here for an hour?

Rack. How!

Sir Chr. Not a moment: the scheme is all settled; the rumbling old family-coach carries her immediately from the church-door to his moated, haunted, old house in the country.

Rack. Indeed!

Sir Chr. Where, besides the Argus himself, she will be watched by no less than two brace of his sisters; four as malicious, musty old maids as ever were soured by solitude, and the neglect of the world.

Rack. A guard not to be corrupted or cozened. Why, Sir Christopher, in a Christian country this must not be suffered. What! a miserable tattered old fellow like him to monopolize such a tempting creature as her?

Sir. Chr. A diabolical plan!

Rack. Besides, the secluding and immuring a girl, possessed of her elegant talents, is little better than robbing the world.

Sir Chr. Infamous! worse than a rape! But where are the means to prevent it?

Rack. Much might be done, if you would lend us your aid.

Sir. Chr. Me? of what use can I—And so, you rascal, you want to employ me again as your pimp.

Rack. You take the thing wrong: I only wish you to stand forth, my dear knight; and, like myself, be the protector of innocence, and a true friend to the public.

Sir Chr. 'A true friend to the public!' A fine stalking-horse that! But, I fear, like other pretenders, Tom, when your own private purpose is served, the poor public will be left in the lurch. But, however, the poor girl does deserve to be saved; and if I can do any thing, not inconsistent with my plan of reforming——

Rack. That was spoke like yourself. Upon what terms are you and Flint at present?

Sir Chr. Oil and vinegar are scarce so opposite.

Rack. Poultice, you smoke a pipe with him sometimes: pray, who are your party?

Poul. Mynheer Sour-Crout, Monsieur de Jarsey, the port manufacturer, Billy Button the tailor, master Flint and I, most evenings take a whiff here.

Rack. Are you all in his confidence on this great occasion.

Poul. Upon this case we have had consultations; but Billy Button is first in his favour, he likes his prescriptions the best.

Rack. From this quarter we must begin the attack: could not we contrive to convene this illustrious senate to-night.

Poul. I should think easily enough.

Rack. But before you meet here?

Poul. Without doubt.

Rack. My dear Poultice, will you undertake the commission?

Poul. I will feel their pulses, to oblige Sir Christopher Cripple.

Sir Chr. But, Peter, dost really think this rash fool is determined?

Poul. I believe, Sir Christopher, he is firmly persuaded that nothing will allay this uncommon heat in his blood, but swallowing the pill matrimonial.

Rack. We must contrive, at least, to take off the gilding, and see what effect that will have on his courage. [*Exit* POUL.

Sir Chr. Well, Major, unfold! what can you mean by this meeting?

Rack. Is it possible you can be at a loss? you, who have so long studied mankind?

Sir Chr. Explain.

Rack. Can't you conceive what infinite struggles must have been felt by this fellow, before he could muster up courage to engage in this dreadful perilous state. How often have you heard the proverbial puppy affirm, that marriage was fishing for a single eel among a barrel of snakes! what infinite odds, that you laid hold of the eel! and then a million to one but he slipt through your fingers!

Sir Chr. True, true.

Rack. Can't you, then, guess what will be his feelings and fears when it comes to the push? Do you think public opinion, his various doubts of himself, and of her, the pride of his family, and the loud claims of avarice (his ruling passion 'till now), wo'n't prove near an equipoise to his love?

Sir Chr. Without doubt.

Rack. At this critical period, wo'n't the concurring advice of all his associates, think you, destroy the balance at once?

Sir Chr. Very probably, Tom, I confess.

Rack. As to our engines, there is no fear of them: Billy Button you have under your thumb; I'll purchase a pipe of port of de Jarsey; and we are sure of old Sour-Crout for a hamper of hock.

Sir Chr. Right, right!—But, after all, what is to become of the girl? Come, Tom, I'll have no foul play shown to her.

Rack. Her real happiness is part of my project.

Enter FILLUP.

Fil. Here be Mynheer Sour-Crout and Mounseer de Jarsey a come.

Sir Chr. We will attend them.—Only think, Tom, what a villain you will be to make me the secret instrument of any more mischief.

Rack. Never fear.

Sir Chr. Particularly, too, now I am fixed to reform.

Rack. It would be criminal in the highest degree.

Sir Chr. Ah, rot your hypocritical face!—I am half afraid, Tom, to trust you; I'll be hanged if you ha'n't some wicked design yourself on the girl! but, however, I wash my hands of the guilt.

Rack. My dear knight, don't be so squeamish! But—the gentlemen within!—Stay! who have we here? Ah, my old friend, master Button!

Enter BUTTON.

But. Your worship is welcome to town!—But where is Sir—Oh! I understood as how your honour had sent for me all in a hurry: I should have brought the patterns before, if I had them: the worst of my enemies can't say but Billy Button is punctual. Here they be: I received them to-night by Wiltshire's waggon, that flies down in eight days.

Sir Chr. To-morrow, Billy, will do; take a seat.

But. I had rather stand.

Sir Chr. I wanted to talk to you upon another affair. What, I suppose you are very busy at present?

But. Vast busy, your honour.

Sir Chr. This marriage, I reckon, takes up most of your time.

But. Your honour?

Rack. Miss Linnet and your old master, Flint, you know.

But. Oh, ay! But the 'squire does not intend to cut a dash till the spring.

Sir Chr. No! nothing has happened, I hope? affairs are all fixed?

But. As a rock: I am sure, now it can't fail; because why, I have p'remptory orders to scour and new line the coachman and footman's old frocks; and am, besides, to turn the lace, and fresh-button the suit his honour made up twenty years ago, come next Lent, when he was shreif for the county.

Rack. Nay, then it is determined?

But. Or he would never have gone to such an expense.

Sir Chr. Well, Billy, and what is your private opinion, after all, of this match?

But. It is not becoming, your honour knows, for a tradesman like me to give his——

Rack. Why not? Don't you think now, Billy, it is a bold undertaking for a man at his time of life?

But. Why, to be sure, his honour is a little stricken in years, as a body may say; and, take all the care that one can, time will wear the nap from even superfine cloth; stitches tear, and elbows will out, as they say——

Sir Chr. And besides, Bill, the bride's a mere baby.

But. Little better, your honour: but she is a tight bit of stuff, and I am confident will turn out well in the wearing. I once had some thoughts myself of taking measure of Miss.

Rack. Indeed!

But. Yes; and, to my thinking, had made a pretty good progress; because why, at church of a Sunday she suffered me to look for the lessons; and, moreover, many a time and oft have we sung psalms out of the very same book.

Rack. That was going a great way.

But. Nay, besides, and more than all that, she has at this precious minute of time a pincushion by her side of my own presentation.

Rack. Ay! and how came the treaty broke off?

But. Why, who should step in in the nick, but the very 'squire himself?

Sir Chr. I am afraid, Bill, your beauty is a little bit of a jilt.

But. No, your worship; it is all along with her mother: 'cause her great aunt, by her father's side, was a clargyman's daughter, she is as pragmatic and proud as the Pope; so, forsooth, nothing will please her for Miss but a bit of quality binding.

Rack. I knew the refusal could not come from the girl; for, without a compliment, Billy, there is no comparison between you and the—why, you are a pretty, slight, tight, light, nimble—

But. Yes; very nimble and slight, and we are both of a height: Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chr. Why, love has made Billy a poet.

But. No, no; quite accident, as I hope to be kissed.

Rack. And your rival is a fusty, foggy, lumbering log!

But. For all the world like my goose; plaguy hot and damned heavy, your honour.

Sir Chr. Why, Billy blazes to-day.

But. And though my purse, mayhap, ben't so heavy as his'n, yet I contrives to pay every body their own.

Rack. I dare say.

But. Ay; and I have, besides, two houses in Avon-street; and, perhaps, a bit or two of land in a corner.

Sir Chr. Oh, the curmudgeonly rogue!

But. And, moreover, if Madam Linnet talks of families, I would have her to know, that I have powerful relations as well as herself: there's Tommy Button, my uncle's own son, that has an employment under the government.

Sir Chr. Ay, Billy! what is it?

But. At this very time he is an exciseman at Wapping. And, besides, there is my cousin Paul Puff, that kept the great pastrycook's shop in the Strand, now lives at Brentford, and is made a justice of the peace.

Rack. As this is the case, I don't think it will be difficult yet to bring matters to bear.

Sir Chr. If Bill will but follow directions.

But. I hope your honour never found me deficient.

Sir Chr. We will instruct you further within.—Major Racket, your arm!

But. Let me help you. Folks may go further and fare worse, as they say: why, I have some thoughts, if I can call in my debts, to retire into the country, and set up for a gentleman.

Rack. Why not? one meets with a great number of them who were never bred to the business.

But. I a'n't much of a mechanic at present; I does but just measure and cut.

Rack. No?

But. I don't think that I have sat cross-legg'd for these six years.

Rack. Indeed!

But. And who can tell, your honour, in a few years, if I behaves well, but, like cousin Puff, I may get myself put in the commission?

Sir Chr. The worshipful William Button, Esq.—it sounds well. I can tell you, Billy, there have been magistrates made of full as bad materials as you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—Enter MRS. LINNET *and* MISS LINNET.

Mrs. Lin. Yes, Kitty, it is in vain to deny it! I am convinced there is some little, low, paltry passion that lurks in your heart.

Miss Lin. Indeed, my dear mother, you wrong me.

Mrs. Lin. Indeed, my dear miss, but I don't! what else could induce you to reject the addresses of a lover like this? Ten thousand pounds a year! Gad's my life, there is not a lady in town would refuse him, let her rank be ever so——

Miss Lin. Not his fortune, I firmly believe.

Mrs. Lin. Well! and who, now-a-days, marries any thing else? Would you refuse an estate, because it happened to be a little encumbered? you must consider the man in this case as a kind of a mortgage.

Miss Lin. But, the disproportion of years—

Mrs. Lin. In your favour, child; the incumbrance will be the sooner removed.

Miss Lin. Then, my dear mother, our minds; how very widely they differ! my nature is liberal and frank, though I am but a little removed from mediocrity; his heart, in the very bosom of wealth, is shut to every social sensation.

Mrs. Lin. And yet, miss, this heart you have had the good luck to unlock. I hope you don't urge his offers to you as a proof of his passion for money? why, you forget yourself, Kate: who, in the name of wonder, do you think that you are? What, because that you have a baby face, and can bawl a few ballads——

Miss. Lin. Nay, madam, you know I was never vain of my talents; if they can procure me a decent support, and in some measure repay my father and you for their kind cultivation——

Mrs. Lin. And how long are you sure your talents, as you call 'em, will serve you? Are a set of features secure against time? wo'n't a single sore throat destroy the boasted power of your pipe? But suppose that should not fail, who can insure you against the whim of the public? will they always continue their favour?

Miss Lin. Perhaps not.

Mrs. Lin. What must become of you then? Now by this means you are safe, above the reach of ill-fortune. Besides, child, to put your own interest out of the question, have you no tender feelings for us? Consider, my love (you don't want for good nature), your consent to this match will, in the worst of times, secure a firm and able friend to the family.

Miss Lin. You deceive yourself, indeed, my dear mother: he a friend! I dare believe the first

proof you will find of his friendship will be his positive commands to break off all correspondence with every relation I have.

Mrs. Lin. That's a likely story, indeed! Well, child, I must set your father to work; I find what little weight my arguments have.

L. Cath. [*without*] Is Mestress Linnet within?

Mrs. Lin. Oh, here comes a protectress of yours, Lady Catharine Coldstream; submit the matter to her: she can have no views, is well read in the ways of the world, and has your interest sincerely at heart.

Enter LADY CATHARINE COLDSTREAM.

L. Cath. How is aw wi you the day, Mestress Linnet and mess? what a dykens is the matter wi mess? she seems got quite i' the dumps: I thought you were aw ready to jump oot o' your skens at the bonny prospec afore you.

Mrs. Lin. Indeed, I wish your ladyship would take Kitty to task; for what I say signifies nothing.

L. Cath. Ah! that's aw wrang! What has been the mater, Mess Kitty! you ken weel enow that children owe an implecit concession to their parents; it is na for bairns to litigate the wull of their friends.

Mrs. Lin. Especially, my lady, in a case where their own happiness is so nearly concerned. There is no persuading her to accept Mr. Flint's offers.

L. Cath. Gad's mercy, mess, how comes aw this about? do na you think you ha drawn a braw ticket in the lottery o' life? do na you ken that the mon is laird of aw the lond in the country?

Miss Lin. Your ladyship knows, madam, that real happiness does not depend upon wealth.

L. Cath. Ah, mess, but it is a bonny engredient. Don't you think, Mestress Linnet, the lass has got some other lad in her heed?

Mrs. Lin. Your ladyship joins in judgement with me: I have charged her; but she stoutly denies it.

L. Cath. Mess, you munna be bashful: an you solecit a cure, your physician must ken the cause o' your malady.

Miss Lin. Your ladyship may believe me, madam, I have no complaint of that kind.

L. Cath. The lass is obstinate. Mestress Linnet, cannot yoursel gi a guess?

Mrs. Lin. I can't say that I have observed—Indeed, some time ago, I was inclined to believe Mr. Button——

L. Cath. What! yon tailor in Stall-street? Ah, Mrs. Linnet, you are aw oot in your guess: the lass is twa weel bred, and twa sonzy to gi her heart to sik a burgis as he: Wully Button? nae, he is nae the lad avaw.

Mrs. Lin. Major Racket, I once thought—but your ladyship knows his affairs took a different turn.

L. Cath. Ah! Racket! that's another man's mater. Lasses are apt enow to set their hearts upon scarlet; a cockade has muckle charms wi our sex; yes. Well, mess, comes the wind fra that corner?

Miss Lin. Does your ladyship think, to dislike Mr. Flint, it is absolutely necessary to have a prepossession for somebody else?

L. Cath. Mrs. Linnet, an you wull withdraw a wee bit, perhaps mess may throw aff her reserve, when there's naebody by but ourselves; a mother, you ken weel, may prove ane too many sometimes.

Mrs. Lin. Your ladyship is most exceedingly

kind. D'ye hear, Kitty? mind what her ladyship says; do, my dear; and be ruled by your friends; they are older and wiser than you. [*Exit*

L. Cath. Well, mess, what's the cause of aw this? what makes you so averse to the wull of your friends?

Miss Lin. Your ladyship knows Mr. Flint.

L. Cath. Ay, unco weel.

Miss Lin. Can your ladyship then be at a loss for a cause?

L. Cath. I canna say Mr. Flint is quite an Adonis; but wha is it that in matrimony gets aw they wish? When I entermarried with Sir Launcelot Coldstream, I was een sik a sprak lass as yoursel, and the baronet bordering upon his grand climacteric. You mun ken, mess, my father was so unsaunzy as to gang out with Charley in the forty-five; after which, his fidelity was rewarded in France by a commission that did na bring him in a bawbee, and a pension that never was paid.

Miss Lin. Infamous ingratitude!

L. Cath. Ay; but I dinna think they will find ony mare sik fools i' the north.

Miss Lin. I hope not.

L. Cath. After this, you canna think, mess, there was mickle siller for we poor bairns that were left; so that, in troth, I was glad to get an establishment; and ne'er heeded the disparity between my guid mon and mysel.

Miss Lin. Your ladyship gave great proofs of your prudence; but my affairs are not altogether so desperate.

L. Cath. Gad's mercy, mess! I hope you dinna make any comparison between Lady Catharine Coldstream, wha has the best blood in Scotland that runs in her veins——

Miss Lin. I hope your ladyship does not suppose——

L. Cath. A lady lineally descended fra the great Ossian himself, and allied to aw the illustrious houses abroad and at home——

Miss Lin. I beg, madam, your ladyship——

L. Cath. And Kitty Linnet, a little play-actor, wha gets applauded or hissed just e'en as the mobility wulls.

Miss Lin. I am extremely concerned, that——

L. Cath. Look'ye, mess, I will cut matters short; you ken weel enow, the first notice that e'er I took of you was on your acting in Allan Ramsay's play of Patie and Roger; ere sin I hae been your fast friend; but an you continue obstinate, and will na succumb, I shall straitway withdraw my protection.

Miss Lin. I shall be extremely unhappy in losing your ladyship's favour.

L. Cath. Mess, that depends entirely on yoursel.

Miss Lin. Well, madam, as a proof how highly I rate it, and how desirous I am of obeying the commands of my parents, it shall not be my fault if their wishes are not accomplished.

L. Cath. That's aw wright now, Kitty: gi me a kiss! you are the prudent lass that I thought you. Love, mess, is a pastime for boys and green girls; aw stuff, fit for nothing but novels and romances; there is nathing solid, na stability.

Miss Lin. Madam——

L. Cath. But to fix your fortune at once, to get above the power o' the world, that, child, is a serious concern.

Mrs. Lin. [*without.*] With your ladyship's leave——

L. Cath. You may come in, Mrs. Linnet;

[*Enter* MRS. LINNET.] your daughter is brought to a proper sense of her duty, and is ready to coincide with your wish.

Mrs. Lin. We are infinitely bound to your ladyship! this is lucky, indeed! Mr. Flint is now below, madam, and begs to be admitted.

L. Cath. Ah! the mon comes in the nick: show him in, the instant. [*Exit* MRS. LIN.] Now, Kity, is your time! do na be shy, lass; but throw out aw your attractions, and fix him that he canna gang back.

Miss Lin. Madam, I hope to behave——

L. Cath. Gad's mercy, how the girl trembles, and quakes! come, pluck up a heart, and consider your aw is at stake.

Miss Lin. I am afraid I shall be hardly able to say a single——

L. Cath. Suppose, then, you sing; gi him a song; there is nothing moves a love-sick loon mair than a song—[*noise without*]. I hear the lad on the stairs. But let the words be aw melting and soft: the Scotch tunes, you ken, are unco pathetic; sing him the Birks of Endermay, or the Braes of Balendine, or the——

Enter FLINT *and* MRS. LINNET.

Maister Flint, your servant! there, sir, you ken the lass of your heart: I have laid for you a pretty solid foundation; but as to the edifice, you must e'en erect it yourself. [*Exit.*

Flint. Please your ladyship I will do my endeavour. Madam Linnet, I have made bold to bring you a present, a small paper of tea, in my pocket: you will order the tea-kettle on.

Mrs. Lin. Oh, sir, you need not have——

Flint. I wo'n't put you to any expense. [*Exit* MRS. LIN.] Well, miss, I understand here, by my lady, that she—that is, that you—with respect and regard to the—ah! ah! wo'n't you please to be seated?

[*Reaches two chairs.*

Miss Lin. Sir? My lover seems as confused as myself. [*Aside.*

Flint. I say, miss, that as I was a-saying, your friends have spoke to you all how and about it.

Miss Lin. About it! about what?

Flint. About this here business that I come about. Pray, miss, are you fond of the country?

Miss Lin. Of the country!

Flint. Ay: because why, I think it is the most prettiest place for your true lovers to live in; something so rural! for my part, I can't see what pleasure pretty misses can take in gollopping to plays, and to balls, and such expensive vagaries; there is ten times more pastime in fetching walks in the fields, in plucking of daisies——

Miss Lin. Haymaking, feeding the poultry, and milking the cows.

Flint. Right, miss.

Miss Lin. It must be own'd they are pretty employments for ladies.

Flint. Yes; for my mother used to say, who, between ourselves, was a notable housewife,

> Fools that are idle,
> May live to bite the bridle.

Miss Lin. What a happiness to have been bred under so prudent a parent!

Flint. Ay, miss, you will have reason to say so; her maxims have put many a pound into my pocket.

Miss Lin. How does that concern me?

Flint. Because why, as the saying is,

Though I was the maker,
You may be the partaker.

Miss Lin. Sir, you are very obliging.

Flint. I can tell you, such offers are not every day to be met with: only think, miss, to have victuals and drink constantly found you, without cost or care on your side! especially, now meat is so dear.

Miss Lin. Considerations by no means to be slighted.

Flint. Moreover, that you may live and appear like my wife, I fully intend to keep you a coach.

Miss Lin. Indeed!

Flint. Yes; and you shall command the horses whenever you please, unless during the harvest, and when they are employed in ploughing and carting; because the main chance must be minded, you know.

Miss Lin. True, true.

Flint. Though I don't think you will be vastly fond of coaching about; for why, we are off of the turnpike, and the sloughs are deadly deep about we.

Miss Lin. What, then, you intend to reside in the country?

Flint. Without doubt; for then, you know, miss, I shall be sure to have you all to myself.

Miss. An affectionate motive! But even in this happy state, where the most perfect union prevails, some solitary hours will intrude, and the time, now and then, hang heavy on our hands.

Flint. What, in the country, my dear miss? not a minute. You will find all pastime and jollity

there; for what with minding the dairy, dunning the tenants, preserving and pickling, nursing the children, scolding the servants, mending and making, roasting, boiling, and baking, you wo'n't have a moment to spare; you will be merry and happy as the days they are long.

Miss Lin. I am afraid the days will be hardly long enough to execute so extensive a plan of enjoyment.

Flint. Never you fear! I am told, miss, that you write an exceeding good hand.

Miss Lin. Pretty well, I believe.

Flint. Then, miss, there is more pleasure in store; for you may employ any leisure time that you have in being my clerk, as a justice of peace: you shall share sixpence out of every warrant, to buy you any little thing that you may want.

Miss Lin. That's finely imagined!—As your enjoyments are chiefly domestic, I presume you have contrived to make home as convenient as can be. You have, sir, good gardens, no doubt?

Flint. Gardens? ay, ay: why, before the great parlour window there grows a couple of yews as tall as a mast and as thick as a steeple; and the boughs cast so delightful a shade, that you can't see your hand in any part of the room.

Miss Lin. A most delicate gloom!

Flint. And then there constantly roosts in the trees a curious couple of owls; which I wo'n't suffer our folks to disturb, as they make so rural a noise in the night——

Miss Lin. A most charming duet!

Flint. And besides, miss, they pay for their lodgings, as they are counted very good mousers, you know.

Miss Lin. True; but within doors, your mansion is capacious, and——

Flint. Capacious? yes, yes; capacious enough: you may stretch your legs without crossing the threshold: why, we go up and down stairs to every room of the house. To be sure, at present, it is a little out of repair; not that it rains in (where the casements are whole) at above five or six places, at present.

Miss Lin. Your prospects are pleasing?

Flint. From off the top of the leads; for why, I have boarded up most of the windows, in order to save paying the tax. But to my thinking, our bed-chamber, miss, is the most plesantest place in the house.

Miss Lin. Oh, sir, you are very polite.

Flint. No, miss, it is not for that; but you must know, miss, that there is a large bow-window facing the east, that does finely for drying of herbs: it is hung round with hatchments of all the folks that have died in the family; and then the pigeon-house is over our heads.

Miss Lin. The pigeon-house?

Flint. Yes; and there, every morning, we shall be waked by day-break with their murmuring, cooing, and courting, that will make it as fine as can be.

Miss Lin. Ravishing! Well, sir, it must be confessed you have given me a most bewitching picture of pastoral life; your place is a perfect Arcadia! But I am afraid half the charms are derived from the painter's flattering pencil.

Flint. Not heightened a bit, as yourself shall be judge. And then, as to company, miss, you may have plenty of that when you will; for we have as pretty a neighbourhood as a body can wish.

Miss Lin. Really?

Flint. There is the widow Kilderkin, that keeps the Adam and Eve, at the end of the town, quite

an agreeable body! (indeed, the death of her husband has drove the poor woman to tipple a bit;) Farmer Dobbin's daughters, and Dr. Surplice, our curate, and wife, a vast conversible woman, if she was not altogether so deaf.

Miss Lin. A very sociable set! Why, sir, placed in this paradise, there is nothing left you to wish.

Flint. Yes, miss, but there is.

Miss Lin. Ay! what can that be?

Flint. The very same that our grandfather had; to have a beautiful Eve by my side. Could I lead the lovely Linnet nothing loath to that bower—

Miss Lin. Oh, excess of gallantry!

Flint. Would her sweet breath but deign to kindle, and *blow up* my hopes!

Miss Lin. Oh, Mr. Flint! I must not suffer this, for your sake; a person of your importance and rank——

Flint. A young lady, miss, of your great merit and beauty——

Miss Lin. A gentleman so accomplished and rich——

Flint. Whose perfections are not only the talk of Bath, but of Bristol, and the whole country round——

Miss Lin. Oh, Mr. Flint; this is too much!

Flint. Her goodness, her grace, her duty, her decency, her wisdom and wit, her shape, slimness, and size, with her lovely black eyes, so elegant, engaging, so modest, so prudent, so pious, and, if I am rightly informed, possessed of a sweet pretty pipe.

Miss Lin. This is such a profusion——

Flint. Permit me, miss, to solicit a speciment of your delicate talents.

Miss Lin. Why, sir, as your extravagant compliments have left me nothing to say, I think the best thing I can do is to sing.

SONG.

The smiling morn, the breathing spring,
Invites the tuneful birds to sing;
And as they warble from each spray,
Love melts the universal lay, &c.

Flint. Enchanting! ravishing sounds! not the nine Muses themselves, nor Mrs. Baddeley, is equal to you.

Miss Lin. Oh, fy!

Flint. May I flatter myself that the words of that song were directed to me?

Miss Lin. Should I make such a confession, I should ill deserve the character you have been pleased to bestow.

Enter Lady CATHARINE COLDSTREAM.

L. Cath. Come, come, maister Flint, I'll set your hert at rest in the instant: you ken weel enow, lasses are apt to be modest and shy; then take her answer fra me. Prepare the minister, and aw the rest of the tackle, and you will find us ready to gang to the kirk.

Flint. Miss, may I rely on what her ladyship says?

L. Cath. Gad's mercy! I think the mon is bewitched! he wonna take a woman of quality's word for sik a trifling thing as a wife.

Flint. Your ladyship will impute it all to my fears. Then I will straight set about getting the needful.

L. Cath. Gang your gait as fast as you list.

Flint. Lord bless us! I had like to have forgot—I have, please your ladyship, put up here in a purse a few presents, that if miss would but deign to accept——

L. Cath. Ah! that's aw wright; quite in the order of things: as matters now stand, there is no harm in her accepting of presents fra you, Maister Flint; you may produce.

Flint. Here is a Porto-Bello pocket-piece of Admiral Varnon, with his image a one side, and six men of war only, all in full sail on the other—

L. Cath. That's a curious medallion!

Flint. And here's a half-crown of Queen Anne's, as fresh as when it came out from the Mint: I have refused two and eight-pence for it, a hundred times.

L. Cath. Yes, yes; it is in very fine preservation.

Flint. In this here paper, there be two mourning-rings; that, which my aunt Bother'em left me, might serve very well, I should think, for the approaching happy occasion.

L. Cath. How! a mourning——

Flint. Because why, the motto's so pat:

True, till death
Shall stop my breath.

L. Cath. Ay, ay; that contains mickle morality, mess.

Flint. And here is, fourthly, a silver coral and bells, with only a bit broke off the coral when I was cutting my grinders: this was given me by my godfather Slingsby; and I hope will be in use again, before the year comes about.

L. Cath. Na doubt, na doubt! Leave that matter to us; I warrant we impede the Flint family from fawing into oblivion.

Flint. I hope so: I should be glad to have a

son of my own, if so be, but to leave him my fortune; because why, at present there is no more that I care a farthing about.

L. Cath. Quite a philosopher. Then despatch, Maister Flint, despatch! for you ken, at your time of life, you hanna a moment to lose.

Flint. True, true. Your ladyship's entirely devoted—Miss, I am your most affectionate slave! [*Exit.*

L. Cath. A saunzy lad, this Maister Flint: you see, mess, he has a meaning in aw he does.

Miss Lin. Might I be permitted to alter your ladyship's words, I should rather say, *meanness.*

L. Cath. It is na mickle mater what the mon is at present; wi' a little management, you may mould him into any form you list.

Miss Lin. I am afraid he is not made of such pliant materials: but, however, I have too far advanced to retire; the die is cast! I have no chance now, unless my Corydon should happen to alter his mind.

L. Cath. Na, mess; there is na danger in that: you may ken the treaty is concluded under my mediation; an he should dare to draw back, Lady Catharine Coldstream would find means to punish his perfidy.—Come away, mess. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—The Bear Inn.

SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE, SOUR-CROUT, DE JARSEY, MAJOR RACKETT, *and* POULTICE, *discovered sitting at a Table.*

Sir Chr. We must take care that Flint does not surprise us; for the scoundrel is very suspicious.

Rack. There is no danger of that; I lodged him safely at Linnet's: Button stands sentry at the end of the street! so that we shall be instantly apprised of every motion he makes.

Poul. Well managed, my Major!

Sir Chr. Yes, yes; the cunning young dog knows very well what he is about.

Sour-Cr. Upon my vord, Major Rackett has very fine disposition to make a figure at de head of de army; five or six German campaigns will—Ah, dat is de best school in de vorld for make a de var.

Sir Chr. Five or six German campaigns!

Sour-Cr. Ay, chevalier; vat you say to dat?

Sir Chr. O mynheer! nothing at all: a German war, for aught I know, may be a very good school; but it is a damned expensive education for us.

De Jar. C'est vrai, chevalier; dat is all true; ce pays la, dat place is de grave for the Frenchman and de fine English guinea.

Sir Chr. True, monsieur; but our guineas are rather worse off than your men, for they stand no chance of rising again.

De Jar. Ha, ha, ha! dat is ver vell! le chevalier hav beaucoup d'esprit, great deal of wit, ma foi.

Rack. I think the knight is in luck. But don't let us lose sight of our object! You, gentlemen, are all prepared, perfect, in the several parts you are to play?

All. Ay, ay.

Rack. You, Mynheer Sour-Crout?

Sour-Cr. I understand: I will pique his honour; de pride of his famille.

Rack. Right. Poultice——

Poul. I will alarm him on the side of his health.

Sir Chr. Next to his money, the thing in the world he most minds.

Rack. You, De Jarsey, and Button, will employ all your eloquence on the prudential side of the—Oh, dear Jarsey! here is a draft for the pipe of port that I promised.

De Jar. Dat is right.

Rack. The only receipt to get bawds, boroughs, or Frenchmen. [*Aside.*]—Oh, here Billy comes.

Enter BUTTON.

Well, Billy! what news?

But. I am vast afraid all matters are concluded at last.

Rack. Ay! prithee, why so?

But. Because why, in ten minutes after you went, out bolted the Squire, and hurry-scurried away to Lawyer Lattitat's, who, you know, arrests his tenants, and does all his consarns.

Rack. True: Well—

But. I suppose, to gi' him orders about drawing up the writings.

Sir Chr. Not unlikely. But you think Flint will come to the club?

But. There is no manner of doubt of it; because why, he halloo'd to me from over the way, "What, Billy, I suppose you are bound to the Bear: well, boy, I shall be hard at your heels;" and he seemed in prodigious vast spirits.

Rack. I am mistaken if we don't lower them a little. Well, gentlemen, the time of action draws near. Knight, we must decamp.

Sir Chr. When you will.

Rack. I think, Sir Christopher, you lodge in the same house with the Linnets?

Sir Chr. Just over their heads.

Rack. Then thither we will go. Ten to one, if our plot operates as I expect, the hero will return to their house.

Sir Chr. Most likely.

Rack. We are come to a crisis, and the catastrophe of our piece cannot be very far off.

Sir Chr. I wish, like other plays, it may not end in a marriage.

Rack. Then shall I be most confoundedly bit. But come, knight.

Sir Chr. Rot you! I do as fast as I can.—I can't think, Rackett, what the deuce makes thee so warm in this business; there is certainly something at the bottom that I do not comprehend. But do, Major, have pity on the poor girl: upon my soul, she is a sweet little syren! so innocent and——

Rack. Pho, pho! don't be absurd! I thought that matter had been fully explained. This, knight, is no time to look back! but suppose now I should have a little mischief in hand—

Sir Chr. How! of what kind?

Rack. "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest knight, till done, and then applaud the deed!"

Sir Chr. It is very extraordinary, Major Rackett, if you are determined to make the Devil a visit, that you can't pay it alone; or, if you must have company, what a pox makes you think of fixing on me?

Rack. Hey-day! ha, ha, ha! What, in the vapours again? we must have some more punch.

Sir Chr. You are mistaken; that won't have power to change the state of my mind: my resolves are too firm——

Rack. And who wishes to break them? I only

ask your assistance to-night; and your reformation, you recollect, don't begin till to-morrow.

Sir Chr. That's true, indeed: but no human power shall prevail on me to put it off any longer than to-morrow.

Rack. Or the next day at furthest.

Sir Chr. May I be damn'd if I do!

[*Exeunt* RACK. *and* SIR CHR.

Poul. Come, lads, light your pipes! Which of us shall be first to attack? Billy——

But. Wo'n't it be rather too bold for me to begin?

Poul. Then let us leave it to chance.—Hush! I hear him lumbering in! compose your looks; let his reception be solemn and grave.

But. Leave that chair for him.

Enter FLINT.

Flint. How fares it, my lads?—Well, boys, matters are settled, at last; the little Kate has complied, and to-morrow is fixed for the day.

Poul. You have settled it then?

Flint. As firm as a rock.

Poul. So you can't retreat, if you would?

Flint. Retreat! I have no such design.

Poul. You ha'n't?

Flint. No, to be sure, you great fool! What the deuce would Poultice be at? [*Aside.*

Poul. Nay, then, neighbours, what we have been saying will just signify nothing.

Flint. Saying? why, you have not heard—that is, nobody——

Poul. No, nothing very material—only—but as the matter is carried so far——

Flint. So far? why, I hope you have not found out any flaw! Kitty has not——

Poul. No, no; nothing of that; no, upon my word! I believe, a very modest, prudent, good girl, neighbour.

All. No manner of doubt.

Flint. Well then? but what a plague is the meaning of this? you all sit as silent and glum—why, can't you speak out, with a pox?

Poul. Why, squire, as we are all your fixed friends, we have been canvassing this matter amongst us.

Flint. You have?

Poul. Marriage, you know very well, is no trifling affair; too much caution and care can't be used.

Flint. That I firmly believe, which has made me defer it so long.

Poul. Pray lend me your hand! how is the state of your health? do you find yourself hearty and strong?

Flint. I think so; that is, I—you ha'n't observed any bad symptoms of late?

Poul. No, but you used to have pains flying about you.

Flint. Formerly; but since I have fixed my gout to a fit, they are gone: that, indeed, lays me up for four or five months in a year.

Poul. A pretty long spell: and, in such a case, do you think that marriage——

Flint. The most best receipt in the world: why, that, man, was one of my motives. Wives, you know, are allowed to make very good nurses.

Poul. That, indeed——

Flint. Ay: and then they are always at hand; and, besides, they don't cost one a farthing.

Poul. True, true. Why, you look very jolly, and fresh; does not he?

All. Exceedingly.

Poul. Yet he can't be less than——let me see! Wasn't you under old Syntax, at Wells?

Flint. He died the year I left school.

Poul. That must be a good forty years since.

Flint. Come sheep-shearing next.

Poul. Then, squire, you are hard upon sixty.

Flint. Not far away, Master Poultice.

Poul. And Miss Linnet—sixteen. You are a bold man! Not but there are instances where men have survived many years such disproportionate marriages as these.

Flint. Survived! and why should they not?

Poul. But then their stamina must be prodigiously strong.

Flint. Stamina!

Roul. Let us see, Button! there was Dr. Dotage, that married the Devonshire girl; he had a matter of——

But. No, no; he dropped off in six months.

Poul. True, true; I had forgot.

Flint. Lord have mercy!

But. Indeed, an old master of mine, Sir Harry O'Tuff, is alive, and walks about to this day.

Flint. Hey!

Poul. But you forget where Sir Harry was born, and how soon his lady eloped.

But. In the honey-moon; with Captain Pike, of the guards: I mind it full well.

Poul. That, indeed, alters the case.

Flint. Well, but, Billy; you are not serious in this? you don't think there is any danger of death?

But. As to the matter of death, the doctor knows better than I, because why, that lies in his way: but I shall never forget Colonel Crazy,

one of the best customers that ever I had; I never ink of him without dropping a tear.

Flint. Why? what was the matter with him?

But. Married Lady Barbary Bonnie, as it might be about midnight on Monday——

Flint. Well!

But. But never more saw the sweet face of the sun.

Flint. What! did he die?

But. Within an hour after throwing the stocking.*

Flint. Good Lord! that was dreadful indeed! Of what age might he be?

But. About your time of life.

Flint. That is vastly alarming. Lord bless me, Bill, I am all of a tremble.

But. Ay, truly, it behoves your honour to consider what you are about.

Flint. True.

But. Then, what a world of money must go! running forwards and backwards to town, and jaunting to see all the fine sights in the place——

Flint. I sha'n't take her to many of them: perhaps I may show her the Parliament-house, the plays, and Boodle's, and Bedlam, and my Lord-Mayor, and the lions.

But. And then the vast heap of fine clothes you must make ——

Flint. What occasion for that?

But. As you ar'n't known, there is no doing without; because why, every body passes there for what they appears.

* *Throwing the stocking.*] A ceremony that closed the wedding-day, and is still kept up in the Western counties. It had a Saxon origin, and is supposed to indicate that woman, like a stocking, would equally suit any husband.

Flint. Right, Billy; but I believe I have found out a way to do that pretty cheap.

But. Which way may be that?

Flint. You have seen the minister that's come down to tack us together——

But. I have: is he a fine man in the pulpit?

Flint. He don't care much to meddle with that; but he is a prodigious patriot, and a great politician to boot.

But. Indeed!

Flint. And he has left behind him, at Paris, a choice collection of curious rich clothes, which he has promised to sell me a penn'orth.

Poul. Pho! what Billy talks of are trifles to the evils you are to expect: to have a young girl break in upon all your old ways; your afternoon's nap interrupted, and perhaps not suffered to take your pipe of a night——

Flint. No!

Poul. All your former friends forbidden your house——

Flint. The fewer comes in, the less will go out: I sha'n't be very sorry for that.

Poul. To make room for her own numerous clan——

Flint. Not a soul of them shall enter the doors.

Poul. A brood of babes at your board, whose fathers she herself wo'n't find it easy to name——

Flint. To prevent that, I'll lock her up in a room.

Poul. The King's Bench will break open the door.

Flint. Then I'll turn her out of the house.

Poul. Then her debts will throw you into a gaol.

Flint. Who told you so?

Poul. A dozen of proctors.

Flint. Then I will hang myself out of the way.

Poul. So she will become possessed of her jointure, and her creditors foreclose your estate.

Flint. What a miserable poor toad is a husband, whose misfortunes not even death can relieve!

But. Think of that, squire, before it be too late.

Flint. Well, but friends, neighbours, what the deuce can I do? Are you all of a mind?

De Jar. All, all; dere is no question at all: what, a garçon of your ancient famille, to take up with a pauvre petite bourgoise a?

Flint. Does that never happen in France?

De Jar. Never, but when Monsieur de Baron is very great beggar, and de bourgoise has damn'd deal de guinea.

Poul. That is none of our case.

Flint. No, no. Mynheer, do your people never make up such matches?

Sour-Cr. Never, never: what! a German dishonour his stock! why, mester Flint, should Mestress Linnet bring you de children for de ten generations to come, they could not be chose de canons de Strasbourg.

Flint. No!

Poul. So, squire, take it which way you will, what dreadful danger you run!

Flint. I do.

Poul. Loss of friends——

But. Pipe and afternoon's nap——

Sour-Cr. Your famille gone to de dogs——

De Jar. Your peace of mind to de devil——

Poul. Your health——

But. Your wealth——

Poul. Plate, money, and manors——

All. Your——

Flint. Enough, dear neighbours, enough! I feel it, I feel it too well! Lord have mercy, what a miserable scrape am I in! And here, too, not an hour ago, it cost me the Lord knows what in making her presents.

Poul. Never mind that; you had better part with half you are worth in the world.

Flint. True, true. Well then, I'll go and break off all matters this minute.

Poul. The wisest thing you can do.

But. The sooner the better.

Flint. No doubt, no doubt in the——And yet, Button, she is a vast pretty girl: I should be heartily sorry to lose her. Dost think one could not get her on easier terms than on marriage?

But. It is but trying, however.

Flint. To tell truth, Billy, I have always had that in my head; and, at all events, I have thought of a project that will answer my purpose.

But. Ay, squire! what is it?

Flint. No matter. And, do you hear, Billy? should I get her consent, if you will take her off my hands, and marry when I begin to grow tired, I'll settle ten pounds a-year upon you, for both your lives.

But. Without paying the taxes?

Flint. That matter we will talk of hereafter.

[*Exit.*

Poul. So, so! we have settled this business, however.

But. No more thoughts of his taking a wife.

Poul. He would sooner be tied to a gibbet. But, Billy, step after him (they will let you in at Sir Christopher Cripple's door) and bring us, Bill, a faithful account.

But. I will, I will. But where shall you be?

Poul. Above, in the Phœnix; we wo'n't stir out of the house. But be very exact!

But. Never fear. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—A Chamber.

MISS LINNET, *alone.*

Miss Lin. Heigh-ho! what a sacrifice am I going to make! but it is the will of those who have a right to all my obedience; and to that I will submit.—[*Loud knocking at the door.*] Bless me! who can that be at this time of night? Our friends may err; and projects, the most prudentially pointed, may miss of their aim: but age and experience demand respect and attention, and the undoubted kindness of our parents' designs, claims, on our part, at least, a grateful and ready compliance.

Enter NANCY.

Miss Lin. Nancy, who was that at the door?

Nancy. Mr. Flint, Miss, begs the favour of speaking five words to you.

Miss Lin. I was in hopes to have had this night at least to myself. Where is my mother?

Nancy. In the next room, with Lady Catharine, consulting about your clothes for the morning.

Miss Lin. He is here. Very well; you may go. [*Exit* NANCY.

Enter FLINT.

Flint. She is alone, as I wished. Miss, I beg pardon for intruding at this time of night: but——

Miss Lin. Sir!

Flint. You can't wonder that I desire to enjoy your good company every minute I can.

Miss Lin. Those minutes, a short space will place, Mr. Flint, in your power: if till then you had permitted me to——

Flint. Right. But, to say truth, I wanted to have a little serus talk with you of how and about it. I think, miss, you agree, if we marry, to go off to the country directly.

Miss Lin. If we marry? Is it, then, a matter of doubt?

Flint. Why, I will tell you, miss: with regard to myself, you know, I am one of the most ancientest families in all the country round——

Miss Lin. Without doubt.

Flint. And as to money and lands, in these parts, I believe, few people can match me.

Miss Lin. Perhaps not.

Flint. And as to yourself (I don't speak in a disparaging way) your friends are low folks, and your fortune just nothing at all.

Miss Lin. True, sir: but this is no new discovery; you have known this——

Flint. Hear me out. Now, as I bring all these good things on my side, and you have nothing to give me in return but your love, I ought to be pretty sure of the possession of that.

Miss Lin. I hope the properly discharging all the duties of that condition, which I am shortly to owe to your favour, will give you convincing proofs of my gratitude.

Flint. Your gratitude, miss! but we talk of your love! and of that I must have plain and positive proofs.

Miss Lin. Proofs! of what kind?

Flint. To steal away directly with me to my lodgings——

Miss Lin. Your lodgings?

Flint. There pass the night; and in the morning, the very minute we rise, we will march away to the abbey.

Miss Lin. Sir!

Flint. In short, miss, I must have this token of your love, or not a syllable more of the marriage.

Miss Lin. Give me patience!

Flint. Come, miss; we have not a moment to lose; the coast is clear: should somebody come, you will put it out of my power to do what I design.

Miss Lin. Power! hands off, Mr. Flint! power! I promise you, sir, you shall never have me in your power.

Flint. Hear, miss.

Miss Lin. Despicable wretch! from what part of my character could your vanity derive a hope that I would submit to your infamous purpose?

Flint. Don't be in a——

Miss Lin. To put principle out of the question, not a creature that had the least tincture of pride could fall a victim to such a contemptible——

Flint. Why, but, miss——

Miss Lin. It is true, in compliance with the earnest request of my friends, I had consented to sacrifice my peace to their pleasure; and, though reluctant, would have given you my hand.

Flint. Vastly well!

Miss Lin. What motive, but obedience to them, could I have had in forming an union with you? Did you presume I was struck with your personal merit, or think the sordidness of your mind and manners would tempt me?

Flint. Really, miss, this is carrying——

Miss Lin. You have wealth, I confess; but where could have been the advantage to me? As a reward for becoming your drudge, I might, perhaps, have received a scanty subsistence; for I could hardly suppose you would grant the free use of that to your wife, which your meanness had denied to yourself.

Flint. So, so, so! By and by she will alarm the whole house.

Miss Lin. The whole house! the whole town shall be told! Sure, the greatest misfortune that poverty brings in its train is the subjecting us to the insults of wretches like this, who have no other merit than what their riches bestow on them.

Flint. What a damnable vixen!

Miss Lin. Go, sir! leave the house! I am ashamed you have had the power to move me; and never more let me be shocked with your sight!

Enter LADY CATHARINE *and* MRS. LINNET.

L. Cath. How's aw wi you within? Gad's mercy, what's the mater wi mess? I well hope, Maister Flint, it is nae you wha ha set her a wailing.

Mrs. Lin. Kitty, my love!

Miss Lin. A modest proposal of that gentleman's making——

L. Cath. Of what kind?

Miss Lin. Only this moment to quit my father and you, and take up my lodging with him.

L. Cath. To-night! aw, that is quite out of the order of things; that is ne'er done, Maister Flint, till after the ceremony of the nuptials is said.

Flint. No! then, I can tell your ladyship, it will never be done.

L. Cath. How!

Enter MAJOR RACKET, SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE, *and* BUTTON.

Sir Chr. We beg pardon for taking the liberty to come in, Mrs. Linnet; but we were afraid some accident might have happened to miss.

Mrs. Lin. There has, sir.

Rack. Of what kind?

Mrs. Lin. That worthy gentleman, under pretence of friendship to us, and honourable views to my daughter, has hatched a treacherous design inevitably to ruin my child.

Sir Chr. What, he! Flint!

Mrs. Lin. Even he.

Sir Chr. An impudent son of a——Billy, lead me up, that I may take a peep at the puppy. Your servant, young gentleman! what, is it true that we hear? A sweet swain this, to tempt a virgin to sin! Why, Old Nick has made a mistake here—he used to be more expert in his angling—for what female on earth can be got to catch at this bait!

L. Cath. Haud, haud your hond, Sir Christopher Cripple! let Maister Flint and I have a short conference upo' the occasion. I find, Maister Flint, you ha made a little mistake; but marriage will set aw matters right i' the instant: I suppose you persevere to gang wi mess to kirk in the morning.

Flint. No, madam; nor the evening neither.

L. Cath. Mercy a Gad! what, do you refuse to ratify the preliminaries?

Flint. I don't say that neither.

Sir Chr. Then name the time in which you will fulfil them: a week?

L. Cath. A fortnight?

Mrs. Lin. A month?

Flint. I wo'n't be bound to no time.

Rack. A rascally evasion of his, to avoid an action at law.

Sir Chr. But, perhaps, he may be disappointed in that.

L. Cath. Well, but, Maister Flint, are you willing to make mess a pecuniary acknowledgement for the damage?

Flint. I have done her no damage, and I'll make no reparation.

Rack. Twelve honest men of your country may happen to differ in judgement.

Flint. Let her try, if she will.

Sir Chr. And I promise you she sha'n't be to seek for the means.

L. Cath. If you be nae afraid o' the laws, ha you nae sense o' shame?

Rack. He sense of shame!

L. Cath. Gad's wull, it sha' cum to the proof: you mun ken, gued folk, at Edinbrugh, laist winter, I got acquainted wi' Maister Foote, the play-actor: I wull get him to bring the filthy loon on the stage——

Sir Chr. And expose him to the contempt of the world: he richly deserves it.

Flint. Ay, he may write, you may rail, and the people may hiss, and what care I? I have that at home that will keep up my spirits.

L. Cath. At hame!

Rack. The wretch means his money.

Flint. And what better friend can any man have? Tell me the place where its influence fails? Ask that gentleman how he got his cockade. Money! I know its worth, and therefore can't too carefully keep it: at this very instant I have a proof of its value; it enables me to laugh at that

squeamish impertinent girl, and despise the weak efforts of your impotent malice. Call me forth to your courts when you please; that will procure me able defenders, and good witnesses too, if they are wanted. [*Exit.*

Sir Chr. Now there's a fellow that will never reform!

Rack. You had better let him alone; it is in vain to expect justice or honour from him: what a most contemptible cur is a miser!

Sir Chr. Ten thousand times worse than a highwayman: that poor devil only pilfers from Peter or Paul, and the money is scattered as soon as received; but the wretch that accumulates for the sake of secreting, annihilates what was intended for the use of the world, and is a robber of the whole human race.

Rack. And of himself into the bargain.

But. For all the world like a magpie; he steals for the mere pleasure of hiding.

Rack. Well observed, little Bill.

But. Why, he wanted to bring me into his plot: yes; he made proposals for me to marry miss after his purpose was served——

Sir Chr. How!

But. But he was out in his man; let him give his cast clothes to his coachman; Billy Button can afford a new suit of his own.

Rack. I don't doubt it at all.

But. Fellow! I am almost resolved never to set another stitch for him as long as I live.

Sir Chr. Right, Button, right. But where is Miss Kitty? Come hither, my chicken! Faith, I am heartily glad you are rid of this scoundrel; and if such a crippled old fellow as I was worthy your

notice——But, hold, Kate! there is another chap I must guard you against——

Miss Lin. Another, sir! who?

Sir Chr. Why, this gentleman.

Rack. Me!

Sir Chr. Ay, you: come, come, major, don't think you can impose upon a cunning old sportsman like me.

Rack. Upon my soul, Sir Christopher, you make me blush.

Sir Chr. Oh, you are devilish modest, I know: but to come to the trial at once: I have some reason to believe, major, you are fond of this girl; and, that her want of fortune mayn't plead your excuse, I don't think I can better begin my plan of reforming than by a compliment paid to her virtue: then, take her, and with her two thousand guineas in hand.

Mrs. Lin. How, sir!

Sir Chr. And expect another good spell, when Monsieur le Fevre sets me free from the gout.

But. Please your worship, I'll accept her with half——

L. Cath. Gi me leave, Sir Christopher, to throw in the wedow's mite on the happy occasion: the bride's garment, and her dinner, shall be furnished by me.

Sir Chr. Cock-a-leeky soup.

L. Cath. Sheep's head singed, and haggies in plenty.

Sir Chr. Well said, Lady Catharine.

Miss Lin. How, sir, shall I acknowledge this goodness?

Sir Chr. By saying nothing about it. Well, sir, we wait your answer.

Rack. I think the lady might first be consulted: I should be sorry a fresh prosecution should follow so fast on the heels of the——

Sir Chr. Come, come, no trifling; your resolution at once.

Rack. I receive, then, your offer with pleasure.

Sir Chr. Miss!

Miss Lin. Sir, there is a little account to be first settled between this gentleman and an old unhappy acquaintance of mine.

Sir Chr. Who?

Miss Lin. The major can guess—the unhappy Miss Prim.

Sir Chr. You see, major, your old sins are rising in judgement.

Rack. I believe, madam, I can satisfy that.

Miss Lin. I sha'n't give you the trouble. But first, let me return you all my most grateful thanks for your kind intentions towards me: I know your generous motives, and feel their value, I hope, as I ought; but might I be permitted to choose, I beg to remain in the station I am: my little talents have hitherto received the public protection, nor, whilst I continue to deserve, am I the least afraid of losing my patrons. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Written by R. CUMBERLAND, Esq.

Spoken by MRS. JEWELL.

CONFIDING in the justice of the p.ace,
To you *the Maid of Bath* submits her case:
Wrong'd and defeated of three several spouses,
She lays her damages for nine full houses.
Well, sirs, you've heard the parties, *pro* and *con*.
Do the *pro's* carry it? shall the suit go on?
Speak, hearts, for us! to them we make appeal:
Tell us not what you think, but what you feel:
Ask us, why bring a private case to view?
We answer with a sigh—because 'tis true:
For though invention is our poet's trade,
Here he but copies parts which others play'd.
For on a ramble, late one starry night,
With Asmodeo, his familiar sprite,
High on the wing, by his conductor's side,
This guilty scene the indignant Bard descried;
Soaring in air, his ready pen he drew,
And dash'd the glowing satire as he flew:
For in these rank luxuriant times, there needs
Some strong bold hand to pluck the noxious weeds.
The rake of sixty, crippled hand and knee,
Who sins on claret, and repents on tea;
The witless macaroni, who purloins
A few cant words, which some pert gambler coins;
The undomestic Amazonian dame,
Stanch to her *coterie*, in despite of fame;
These are the victims of our Poet's plan;
But most, that *monster*—an unfeeling man.
When such a foe provokes him to the fight,
Though maim'd, out sallies the puissant knight;
Like Withrington, maintains the glorious strife,
And only yields his laurels—with his life.

THE NABOB;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

REMARKS.

THE Nabob is another and very successful attempt to detect and expose the improper application of riches easily obtained, if not improperly so. In the case of the suddenly enriched *Commissary* and agent, we simply contemplated a squanderer and fool, who sought for silly distinction by equally silly means; but in this counterpart we discern a villain of higher aim and deeper stamp, who, returning to his native soil, laden with ill-gotten pelf, applies it to the annoyance, the ruin of his neighbours. By these means, the features of *country life* were totally changed in some parts, and the commercial superseded the landed interest, by the corrupt return of M. P.'s to seats so obtained. Several failures, however, of entire success, and the reduction of a few to their original nothingness, so far wrought a practical lesson for the thinking portion of the residue of *Nabobs*—for such was the name bestowed on those who returned with the spoils or the savings of an Oriental *residence*. Public opinion entertained against them the notion of dark and horrid crimes, and the public accuser prosecuted (short of conviction) the chief perpetrator of the day, who escaped by dint of arithmetic; the good he did to our settlements counter-balancing the bad. It was left to our times to see a Governor-General of India returning home comparatively poor! A strange anomaly

that has arrayed against the title of *Hastings*, the whole class of arithmeticians, who were recently in coalition to support that very name; and they succeeded.

But "the new gentry" of the year 1772, when this comedy was first performed, were not entirely callous to the force of ridicule; for we find, that some of them fathered the character of Sir Matthew Mite upon a real character among their own party, and showed signs of severe vengeance. The *odium* was not ill-founded, as old Baker saith, but might have been pushed too far as regarded General Smith, whom Foote evidently had in view. *Mite* is a good distinguishable name for the son of a cheesemonger; though, if the papa-mite sold butter likewise, either Firkin, or Lump might have described him as well.

Sir Matthew's profligacy, his connexion with Match'em, and some flagitious suggestions in the long scene with her, serve but to throw into deeper shade his oglings—equally affected and ridiculous, with the Antiquarian Society, who at that time, and long after, innocently stood the grin of "all the wits."

The Nabob was eminently successful on the boards of the Haymarket, filling the coffers of the treasury, though less in amount than his of the borders of Ganges.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DUBLIN,
BY MR. FOOTE,
On the 19th of November, 1773.

UPWARDS of twenty years are fled and wasted
Since in this spot your favour first I tasted.
Urg'd by your smiles through various realms to roam,
The Muse now brings her motley cargo home;
For frugal Nature, with an equal hand,
Bestows peculiar gifts on every land.
To France she gave her rapid repartee,
Bows, and *bon mots*, fibs, fashions, flattery,
Shrugs, grins, grimace, and sportive gaiety:
Arm'd with the whole artillery of love,
Latium's soft sons possess the powers to move;
Humour, the foremost of the festive crew,
Source of the comic scene, she gave to you;
Humour, with arched brow, and leering eye,
Shrewd, solemn, sneering, subtle, slow, and sly;
Serious herself, yet laughter still provoking,
By teasing, tickling, jeering, gibing, joking:
Impartial gift, that owns nor rank nor birth!
'Tis theirs who rule the realm, or till the earth;
Theirs who in senates wage the wordy war,
And theirs whose humble lot conducts the car.
If aught deriv'd from her adorns my strain,
You gave, at least discover'd first, the vein.
Should wide experience, or maturing age,
Have brought or mirth or moral to the stage,
To you, the patrons of the wilder song,
The chaster notes in justice must belong:

But should infirmities with time conspire,
My force to weaken or abate my fire,
Less entertainment may arise to you,
But to myself less danger will ensue.
If age contracts my muscles, shrills my tone,
No man will claim those foibles as his own;
Nor, if I halt or hobble through the scene,
Malice point out what citizen I mean:
No foe I fear more than a legal fury,
Unless I gain this circle for my jury.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir Matthew Mite	*Mr. Foote.*
Sir John Oldham	*Mr. Gentleman.*
Mr. Thomas Oldham	*Mr. Aickin.*
Young Oldham	*Mr. Du Bellamy.*
Mr. Mayor	*Mr. Parsons.*
Touchit	*Mr. Baddeley.*
First Antiquarian	*Mr. Loyd.*
Second Antiquarian	*Mr. Hamilton.*
Secretary	*Mr. Davis.*
Rapine	*Mr. Lings.*
Nathan	*Mr. Castle.*
Moses	*Mr. Jacobs.*
Janus Putty	*Mr. Weston*
Conserve	*Mr. Fearon.*
Waiter	*Mr. Ward.*

WOMEN.

Lady Oldham	*Mrs. Egerton.*
Sophy	*Miss Ambrose.*
Mrs. Match'em	*Mrs. Gardner.*
Crocus	*Miss Craven.*

Beadle, Servants, &c.

SCENE—A Borough lying to the Westward of the Metropolis.

THE

NABOB.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE—A Chamber.

Enter LADY OLDHAM *and* SIR JOHN OLDHAM.

L. Old. NOT a syllable more will I hear!

Sir John. Nay, but, my dear——

L. Old. I am amazed, Sir John, at your meanness! or that you could submit to give his paltry proposals so much as a reading!

Sir John. Nay, my dear, what would you have had me done?

L. Old. Done? returned them with the contempt they deserved. But, come, unfold! I am calm: reveal the pretty project your precious head has produced.

Sir John. Nay, my dear, as to—that my head produced——

L. Old. Nay, I don't wonder that shame has tied up your tongue! But, come; I will spare the confusion, and tell you what you would say. Here, Lady Oldham, Sir Matthew Mite has just

sent me a letter, modestly desiring that, in return for the ruin he has brought on me and my house, I would be so kind as to bestow upon him my darling daughter, the hopes of my—And is it possible you can be mean enough to think of such an alliance? Will you, Sir John, oblige me with an answer to a few short questions?

Sir John. Without doubt.

L. Old. I suppose you consider yourself as sprung from a family, at least, as ancient as any in the county you live in?

Sir John. That, I fancy, will not be denied.

L. Old. Nor was it, I fancy, dishonoured by an alliance with mine?

Sir John. My lady, the very reverse.

L. Old. You succeeded, sir, to a patrimony which, though the liberal and hospitable spirit of your predecessors would not suffer to increase, yet their prudence took care should never be diminished?

Sir John. True.

L. Old. From the public and private virtues of your ancestors, the inhabitants of the neighbouring borough thought their best and dearest interests in no hands so secure as in theirs?

Sir John. Right.

L. Old. Nor till lately were they so tainted by the fashion of the times, as to adopt the egregious absurdity, that, to be faithfully served and protected above, it was necessary to be largely bribed and corrupted below?

Sir John. Why, I can't say, except now and then a bit of venison, or an annual dinner, they have ever put me to any great——

L. Old. Indulge me yet a moment, Sir John! In this happy situation, did the last year cheer-

fully close; our condition, though not opulent, affluent, and you happy in the quiet possession of your family honours.

Sir John. There is no gainsaying of that.

L. Old. Now, look at the dismal, shocking reverse!

Sir John. There is but too much reason in what your ladyship says.

L. Old. And consider, at the same time, to whom you are obliged.

Sir John. Why, what could we do? your ladyship knows there was nobody more against my giving up than yourself.

L. Old. Let me proceed. At this crisis, preceded by all the pomp of Asia, Sir Matthew Mite, from the Indies, came thundering amongst us; and, profusely scattering the spoils of ruined provinces, corrupted the virtue and alienated the affections of all the old friends to the family.

Sir John. That is nothing but truth.

L. Old. Compelled by the same means to defend those that were employed in *securing* your interest, you have been obliged deeply to encumber your fortune; his superior address has procured a return; and probably your petition will complete the ruin his opposition began.

Sir John. Let us hope all for the best.

L. Old. And who can tell, but you may be soon forced to part with your patrimony, to the very insolent, worthless individual who has been the author of your distress?

Sir John. I would sooner perish, my lady!

L. Old. Parallel instances may be produced; nor is it at all unlikely, but Sir Matthew, taking a liking to your family mansion, has pursued this very method to compel you to sell it.

Sir John. It is, my dear, to avoid this necessity that I wish you to give his letter a reading.

L. Old. Is it possible, not to mention the meanness, that you can be weak enough to expect any real service from that infamous quarter?

Sir John. Who can tell, my love, but a consciousness of the mischief he has done us, may have roused some feelings that——

L. Old. His feelings! will he listen to a private complaint, who has been deaf to the cries of a people? or drop a tear for particular distress, who owes his rise to the ruin of thousands?

Sir John. Well, Lady Oldham, I find all that I say signifies nothing.—But here comes brother Thomas; two heads are better than one; let us take his opinion, my love.

L. Old. What need of any opinion? The case is too clear; nor, indeed, if there had been a necessity for consulting another, should I have thought your brother the properest man to advise with on the occasion.

Sir John. And why not? there is not a merchant whose judgement would be sooner taken.

L. Old. Perhaps not, on the value of merchandize, or the goodness of a bill of exchange: but there is a nicety, a delicacy, an elevation of sentiment, in this case, which people who have narrowed their notions with commerce, and considered during the course of their lives their [pecuniary] interest alone, will scarcely comprehend.

Enter MR. THOMAS OLDHAM.

Tho. So, sister! what! upon your old topic, I find?

L. Old. Sir!

Tho. Some pretty comparisons, I suppose, not much to the honour of trade.

L. Old. Nay, brother, you know I have always allowed merchants to be a useful body of men; and considered commerce, in this country, as a pretty resource enough for the younger shoots of a family.

Tho. Exceedingly condescending, indeed! And yet, sister, I could produce you some instances where the younger shoots have flourished and throve, when the revered trunk has decayed.

L. Old. Perhaps, brother Thomas——

Tho. Nay, nay, do not let us revive our ancient disputes! You seem warm; no misunderstanding, I hope?

Sir John. No, no; none, in the least: you know, my lady's temper is apt to be lively now and then.

Tho. Nay, sister.—But, come! what has occasioned this mighty debate?

Sir John. You know, brother, how affairs stand between Sir Matthew and us.

Tho. Well!

Sir John. He has sent us here a kind of a compromise; I don't know well what to call it; a sort of a treaty.

Tho. That in your hand?

Sir John. Yes; and I can't prevail on my lady to give it a reading.

Tho. And why not?

L. Old. To what end?

Tho. A very natural one: in order to know the contents.

L. Old. Of what importance can they be to us?

Tho. That the letter will tell you. But, surely, Lady Oldham, you are rather too nice. Give it me!

Sir John. Is it your ladyship's pleasure?

Tho. Psha! here's a rout, indeed!—One would be apt to suspect that the packet was pestilential, and came from the Archipelago, instead of the Indies. Now let us see what this formidable memorial contains! [*opens the letter.*] "To Sir John Oldham. Sir Matthew Mite having lately seen, at Lady Levant's rout, the eldest Miss Oldham, and being struck with her personal charms, proposes to her father the following treaty."

L. Old. A very monarchical address!

Tho. "*Imprimis:* Upon a matrimonial union between the young lady and him, all hostilities and contention shall cease, and Sir John be suffered to take his seat in security."

L. Old. That he will do, without any obligation to him.

Tho. Are you, sister, certain of that?

L. Old. You don't harbour the least doubt of our merits?

Tho. But do they always prevail?

L. Old. There is now, brother Thomas, no danger to dread; the restraint the popular part of government has in this instance laid on itself, at the same time that it does honour to them, distributes equal justice to all.

Tho. And are you aware what the expense will be to obtain it?—But, pray let me proceed!—"Secondly, as Sir Matthew is bent upon a large territorial acquisition in England, and Sir John Oldham's finances are at present a little out of repair, Sir Matthew Mite will make up the money already advanced in another name, by way of future mortgage upon his estate, for the entire purchase, five lacks of rupees."

L. Old. Now, Sir John! was I right in my guess?

Sir John. Your ladyship is never out.—But, brother Thomas, these same lacks—to what may they amount?

Tho. Sixty thousand, at least.

Sir John. No inconsiderable offer, my lady.

L. Old. Contemptible! but pray, sir, proceed.

Tho. "Or, if it should be more agreeable to the parties, Sir Matthew will settle upon Sir John and his Lady, for their joint lives, a jagghire?"

Sir John. A jagghire?

Tho. The term is Indian, and means an annual income.

L. Old. What strange jargon he deals in!

Tho. His style is a little oriental, I must own; but most exceedingly clear.

L. Old. Yes, to Cossim Ali-Khan, or Mier Jaffeir. I hope you are near the conclusion.

Tho. But two articles more. [*reads.*] "And that the principals may have no cares for the younger parts of their family, Sir Matthew will, at his own expense, transport the two young ladies, Miss Oldham's two sisters, to Madras or Calcutta, and there procure them suitable husbands."

L. Old. Madras, or Calcutta!

Tho. Your patience, dear sister—"And as for the three boys, they shall be either made supercargoes, ships' husbands, or go out cadets and writers in the Company's service."

L. Old. Why, he treats my children like a parcel of convicts: is this their method of supplying their settlements?

Tho. This, with now and then a little kidnapping, dear sister.—Well, madam, you have now the means of getting rid of all your offspring at once: did not I tell you the paper was worth your

perusal? You will reply to his wish; you can have no doubts, I suppose.

L. Old. Not the least, as I will show you. [*Tears the letter.*] And if Sir John has the least spirit or pride, he will treat the insolent principal as I do his proposals.

Tho. But that method, as things stand, may not be altogether so safe. I am sorry you were so hasty in destroying the letter: if I remember rightly, there is mention made of advancing money in another man's name.

L. Old. We have been compelled to borrow, I own; but I had no conception that he was the lender.

Tho. That's done by a common contrivance; not a country lawyer but knows the doctrine of transfer. How much was the sum?

Sir John. Ten thousand pounds.

Tho. And what, Sir John, were the terms?

Sir John. As I could give no real security, my estate being settled till my son John comes of age, I found myself obliged to comply with all that was asked.

Tho. A judgement, no doubt.

Sir John. They divided the sum, and I gave them a couple.

Tho. Which will affect not only your person, but personal property: so they are both in his power.

Sir John. Too true, I am afraid!

Tho. And you may be sent to a gaol, and your family turned into the streets, whenever he pleases.

L. Old. How! Heaven forbid!

Tho. Not the least doubt can be made.—This is an artful project: no wonder that so much con-

trivance and cunning has been an over-match for a plain English gentleman or an innocent Indian. And what is now to be done? Does your daughter Sophy know of this letter?

L. Old. Sir John?

Sir John. It reached my hands not ten minutes ago.

Tho. I had some reason to think that, had you complied, you would not have found her very eager to second your wishes.

L. Old. I don't know that, brother: young girls are easily caught with titles and splendour; magnificence has a kind of magic for them.

Tho. I have a better opinion of Sophy. You know, Lady Oldham, I have often hinted that my boy was fond of his cousin; and, possibly, my niece not totally averse to his wish; but you have always stopped me short, under a notion that the children were too nearly allied.

L. Old. Why, brother, don't you think—

Tho. But that, sister, was not the right reason; you could have easily digested the *cousins*, but the *counting-house* stuck in his way: your favourite maxim has been, that citizens are a distinct race, a sort of creatures that should mix with each other.

L. Old. Bless me, brother, you can't conceive that I—

Tho. Nay, no apology, good Lady Oldham! perhaps you have a higher alliance in view; and let us now consider what is to be done. You are totally averse to this treaty?

L. Old. Can that be a question?

Tho. Some little management is necessary, as to the mode of rejection: as matters now stand, it would not be prudent to exasperate Sir Matthew.

L. Old. Let Sir John discharge the debt due to him at once.

Tho. But where shall we get materials?

L. Old. Can that be a difficult task?

Tho. Exceedingly so, as I apprehend: but few can be found to advance so large a sum on such slender security; nor is it to be expected, indeed, unless from a friend to relieve, or a foe to ruin.

L. Old. Is it possible Sir Matthew can have acted from so infernal a motive, to have advanced the money with a view of distressing us deeper?

Tho. Sir Matthew is a profound politician, and will not stick at trifles to carry his point.

L. Old. With the wealth of the east, we have, too, imported the worst of its vices. What a horrid crew!

Tho. Hold, sister! don't gratify your resentment at the expense of your justice; a general conclusion from a single instance is but indifferent logic.

L. Old. Why, is not this Sir Matthew——

Tho. Perhaps as bad a subject as your passion can paint him: but there are men from the Indies, and many too, with whom I have the honour to live [on friendly terms] who dispense nobly and with hospitality here what they have acquired with honour and credit elsewhere; and, at the same time that they have increased the dominions and wealth, have added virtues, too, to their country.

L. Old. Perhaps so: but what is to be done? suppose I were to wait on Sir Matthew myself.

Tho. If your ladyship is secure of commanding your temper.

Sir John. Mercy on us, brother Thomas, there's no such thing as trusting to that!

L. Old. You are always very obliging, Sir John! if the embassy was to be executed by you——

Tho. Come, come, to end the dispute, I will undertake the commission myself.

L. Old. You will take care, brother, to make no concessions that will derogate from——

Tho. Your dignity, in my hands will have nothing to fear. But should I not see my niece first? She ought to be consulted, I think.

Sir John. By all means.

Tho. For, if she approves of the knight, I don't see any thing in the alliance so much to be dreaded.

L. Old. I will send Sophy to her uncle directly; but I desire the girl may be left to herself; no undue influence! [*Exit.*

Tho. The caution was needless.

Sir John. Why, really, now, brother, but that my lady is too warm, I don't see any thing so very unreasonable in this same paper here that lies scattered about. But, I forget, did he mention any thing of any fortune he was to have with the girl?

Tho. Pho! a paltry consideration, below his concern.

Sir John. My lady herself must own there is something generous in that.

Tho. Will you stay and represent the case to Sophy yourself?

Sir John. She is here!

Enter SOPHY.

Your uncle, child, has something to say to you: you know he loves you, my dear, and will advise you for the best. [*Exit.*

Tho. Come hither, Sophy, my love! don't be

alarmed. I suppose my lady has opened to you, that Sir Matthew has sent a strange kind of a romantic letter.

Sophy. But she did not seem, sir, to suppose that it deserved much attention.

Tho. As matters now stand, perhaps more than she thinks. But come, my good girl, be explicit: suppose the affairs of your family should demand a compliance with this whimsical letter, should you have any reluctance to the union proposed?

Sophy. Me, sir? I never saw the gentleman but once in my life.

Tho. And I do not think that would interest you much in his favour.

Sophy. Sir!

Tho. No prepossession? no prior object that has attracted your notice?

Sophy. I hope, sir, my behaviour has not occasioned this question.

Tho. Oh, no, my dear; it naturally took its rise from the subject. Has your cousin lately been here?

Sophy. Sir!

Tho. Tom Oldham, my son?

Sophy. We generally see him, sir, every day.

Tho. I am glad to hear that: I was afraid some improper attachment had drawn him from the city so often of late.

Sophy. Improper! I dare say, sir, you will have nothing of that kind to fear from my cousin.

Tho. I hope not: and yet I have had my suspicions, I own; but not unlikely you can remove them. Children rarely make confidants of their fathers.

Sophy. Sir!

Tho. Similarity of sentiments, nearness of blood,

and the same season of life, perhaps may have induced him to unbosom to you.

Sophy. Do you suppose, sir, that he would discover to me what he chose to conceal from so affectionate a father?

Tho. Nay, prithee, Sophy, don't be grave! Why, now, do you imagine I should think his preferring your ear to mine, for a melting passionate tale, any violent breach of his duty?

Sophy. You are merry, sir.

Tho. And who knows but you might repay the communication with a similar story? You blush, Sophy.

Sophy. You are really pleased to be so very particular, that I scarce know what answer to make.

Tho. Come, my good niece, I will perplex you no longer: my son has concealed *nothing* from me; and did the completion of your wishes depend *on* my approbation alone, you would have but little to fear. But my lady's notions are so very peculiar, you know, and all her principles so determined and fixed——

Sophy. The merits of my cousin, which she herself is not slow to acknowledge, and time might, I should hope, soften my mother.

Tho. Why, then, my dear niece, leave it to time; in most cases the ablest physician. But let your partiality for Tom be a secret!—I must now endeavour to learn when I can obtain an audience from Sir Matthew.

Sophy. An audience from *him?*

Tho. Yes, child; these new gentlemen, who, from the caprice of fortune, and a strange chain of events, have acquired immoderate wealth, and rose to uncontrolled power abroad, find it difficult

to descend from their dignity, and admit of any equal at home. Adieu, my dear niece! But keep up your spirits! I think I foresee an event that will produce some change in our favour.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE—SIR MATTHEW MITE'S *Hall.*

JANUS *and* CONSERVE *discovered.*

Cons. I own the place of a porter, if one can bear the confinement, is ——; and—then, Sir Matthew has the character of—[*low tap.*] Use no ceremony, Mr. Janus; mind your door, I beseech you.

Janus. No hurry! keep your seat, Mr. Conserve; it's only the tap of a tradesman: I make those people stay till they collect in a body, and so let in eight or ten at a time; it saves trouble.

Cons. And how do they brook it?

Janus. O, wonderfully well, here with us. In my last place, indeed, I thought myself bound to be civil; for, as all the poor devils could get was good words, it would have been hard to have been sparing of them.

Cons. Very considerate!

Janus. But here we are rich; and as the fellows don't wait for their money, it is but fair they should wait for admittance.

Cons. Or they would be apt to forget their condition.

Janus. True.

Cons. Upon the whole, then, you do not regret leaving my lord?

Janus. No; Lord Levee's place had its sweets, I confess; perquisites pretty enough: but what could I do? they wanted to give me a rider.

Cons. A rider?

Janus. Yes; to quarter Monsieur Frissart, my Lady's valet de chambre, upon me; so you know I could not but in honour *resign*.

Cons. No; there was no bearing to be rid by a Frenchman; there was no *staying in* after that.

Janus. It would have been quoted as a precedent against the whole corps.

Cons. Yes. Pox on 'em! our masters are damned fond of encroachments. Is your present duty severe?

Janus. I drudge pretty much at the door; but that, you know, is mere bodily labour: but then, my mind is at ease; not obliged to rack my brain for invention.

Cons. No?

Janus. No; not near the lying here, as in my last place.

Cons. I suppose not, as your master is but newly in town; but you must expect that branch to increase.

Janus. When it does, I shall insist the door be done by a deputy. [*Two raps.*

Cons. Hark! to your post!

Janus. No; sit still! that is some awkward body out of the city; one of our people from Leadenhall-street; perhaps a Director; I sha'n't stir for him.

Cons. Not for a Director? I thought he was the commanding officer, the great captain's captain.

Janus. No, no; quite the reverse; the tables are turned, Mr. Conserve: in acknowledgement for appointing us their servants abroad, we are so obliging as to make them directors at home.

[*A loud rapping.*

Cons. That rap will rouse you, I think.

Janus. Let me take a peep at the wicket. Oh, oh! is it you, with a pox to you? How the deuce came your long legs to find the way hither? —I shall be in no haste to open for you.

Cons. Who is it?

Janus. That eternal teaser, Sir Timothy Tallboy. When once he gets footing, there is no such thing as keeping him out.

Cons. What, you know him then?

Janus. Yes, rot him, I know him too well! he had like to have lost me the best place I ever had in my life.

Cons. How so?

Janus. Lord Lofty had given orders on no account to admit him. The first time, he got by me under a pretence of stroking Keeper, the house-dog; the next, he nick'd me by desiring only just leave to scratch the poll of the parrot, "Poll, Poll, Poll!" I thought the devil was in him if he deceived me a third; but he did, notwithstanding.

Cons. Prithee, Janus, how?

Janus. By begging to set his watch by Tompion's clock in the hall; I smoked his design, and laid hold of him here: [*taking hold of his coat.*] As sure as you are alive, he made but one leap from the stairs to the study, and left the skirt of his coat in my hand?

Cons. You got rid of him, then?

Janus. He made one attempt more; and, for fear he should slip by me, (for you know he is as thin as a slice of beef at Marybone-gardens,) I slapped the door in his face, and told him, the dog was mad, the parrot dead, and the clock stood; and, thank heaven, I have never sat eyes on him since. [*Knock louder.*

Cons. But the door!

Janus. Time enough.—You had no particular commands, master Conserve?

Cons. Only to let you know that Betsy Robins has a rout and supper on Sunday next.

Janus. Constant still, Mr. Conserve, I see. I am afraid I can't come to cards; but I shall be sure to attend the repast. A nick-nack, I suppose?

Cons. Yes, yes; we all contribute, as usual! the substantials from Alderman Sirloin's; Lord Frippery's cook finds fricasees and ragouts; Sir Robert Bumper's butler is to send in the wine; and I shall supply the dessert.

Janus. There are a brace of birds and a hare, that I cribbed this morning out of a basket of game.

Cons. They will be welcome.—[*Knock louder.*] But the folks grow impatient!

Janus. They must stay till I come.—At the old place, I suppose!

Cons. No; I had like to have forgot! Betsy grew sick of St. Paul's, so I have taken her a house amongst the new buildings; both the air and the company is better.

Janus. Right.

Cons. To say truth, the situation was disagreeable on many accounts. Do you know, (though I took care few people should behave better at Christmas,) that, because he thought her a citizen, the housekeeper of Drury-Lane Theatre, *when his master mounted,* refused her a side-box?

Janus. No wonder Miss Betsy was bent upon moving.—What is the name of her street?

Cons. Rebel-row: it was built by a messenger who made his market in the year forty-five. But shall Miss Robins send you a card?

Janus. No, no; I shall easily find out the place. [*Knock.*] Now let us see; who have we here? Gads my life, Mrs. Match'em! my master's amorous agent: it is as much as my place is worth to let her wait for a minute.

[*Opens the door.* *Exit* CONSERVE.

Enter MRS. MATCH'EM, *some Tradespeople, who bow low to* JANUS, *and* THOMAS OLDHAM.

Match. So, sir! this is pretty treatment, for a woman like me to dangle at your gate, surrounded by a parcel of tradespeople!

Janus. I beg pardon; but, madam——

Match. Suppose any of my ladies had chanced to drive by: in a pretty situation they'd have seen me! I promise you I shall make my complaints to Sir Matthew.

Janus. I was receiving some particular commands from my master.

Match. I shall know that from him. Where is he? let him know I must see him directly; my hands are so full I have not a moment to spare.

Janus. At that door the groom of the chamber will take you in charge; I am sure you'll be admitted as soon as announced.

Match. There is as much difficulty to get a sight of this signior as of a member when the parliament's dissolved! [*Exit.*

Janus. Soh! what, you have brought in your bills? damned punctual, no doubt! The steward's room is below.—And, do you hear? when you are paid, be sure you sneak away without seeing me.

All Trades. We hope you have a better opinion——

Janus. Well, well, march! [*Ex. Tradesman.*] So, friend—what is your business, pray?

Tho. I have a message to deliver to Sir Matthew.

Janus. You have—and pray what is the purport?

Tho. That is for his ear alone.

Janus. You will find yourself mistaken in that.

Tho. How?

Janus. It must make its way to his, by passing through mine.

Tho. Is that the rule of the house?

Janus. Ay—and the best way to avoid idle and impertinent prattlers.

Tho. And of that you are to judge?

Janus. Or, I should not be fit for my post. But you are very importunate; who are you? I suppose a Jew broker, come to bring my master the price of stocks.

Tho. No.

Janus. Or some country cousin, perhaps.

Tho. Nor that either.

Janus. Or a voter from our borough below—we never admit them but against an election.

Tho. Still wide of the mark.—[*Aside.*] There is but one way of managing here; I must give the Cerberus a sop, I perceive.—Sir, I have really business with Sir Matthew, of the utmost importance, and if you can obtain me an interview, I shall think myself extremely obliged. [*Gives money.*

Janus. As I see, sir, by your manner, that it is a matter of moment, we will try what can be done; but you must wait for his levee; there is no seeing him yet.

Tho. No?

Janus. He is too busy at present; the waiter at

Almack's has just brought him home his macaroni dress for the hazard-table, and is instructing him to throw the dice with a grace.

Tho. Then where can I wait?

Janus. If you will step into that room, I will take care to call you in time. [*Exit Mr.* OLD.—*Looking at the money.*] A good sensible fellow! At first sight, how easily one may be mistaken in men! [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE—A Chamber.

SIR MATTHEW MITE *in his gaming Dress, a* WAITER *attending.*

Mite. Main and chance?

Wai. Five to nine, please your honour.

Mite. I am at all that is set. How must I proceed?

Wai. With a tap, as the chances are equal; then raise the box genteelly and gently, with the finger and thumb.

Mite. Thus?

Wai. Exactly, your honour. Cinque and quatre; you are out.

Mite. What is next to be done?

Wai. Flirt the bones with an air of indifference, and pay the money that's set.

Mite. Will that do?

Wai. With a little more experience, your honour.

Mite. Then pass the box to my neighbour.

Wai. Yes, or you make a back hand, if you please.

Mite. Cou'dn't you give me some general rules? for then, you know, I might practise in private.

Wai. By all means. Seven, sir, is better nicked by a stamp.

Mite. So?—

Wai. Yes. When you want to throw six and four, or two cinques, you must take the long gallery, and whirl the dice to the end of the table.

Mite. Thus?—

Wai. Pretty well, please your honour. When your chance is low, as tray, ace, or two deuces, the best method is to dribble out the bones from the box.

Mite. Will that do?

Wai. Your honour comes rapidly on.

Mite. So that, perhaps, in a couple of months, I shall be able to tap, flirt, stamp, dribble, and whirl, with any man in the club?

Wai. As your honour has genius, you will make a wonderful progress, no doubt: but these nice matters are not got at in a moment, there must be parts, as well as practice, your honour.

Mite. What! parts for the performance of this?

Wai. This! Why there's Sir Christopher Clumsey, in the whole losing his fortune, (and I believe he was near a twelvemonth about it,) never once threw, paid, or received, with one atom of grace.

Mite. He must have been a dull devil, indeed.

Wai. A mere dunce—got no credit by losing his money; was ruined without the least reputation.

Mite. Perhaps so. Well, but, Dick, as to the oaths and phrases that are most in use at the club.

Wai. I have brought them here in this paper; as soon as your honour has got them by heart, I

will teach you when, and in what manner, to use them.

Mite. (after looking at the paper.) How long do you apprehend before I may be fit to appear at the table?

Wai. In a month or six weeks. I would advise your honour to begin in the Newmarket week, when the few people left do little better than piddle.

Mite. Right—so I shall gain confidence against the club's coming to town.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs. Crocus, from Brompton, your honour.

Mite. Has she brought me a bouquet?

Serv. Your honour?

Mite. Any nosegays, you blockhead!

Serv. She has a boy with a basket.

Mite. Show her in; *(Exit* SERV.*)*—Well, Dick, you will go down to my steward, and teach him the best method of making a roleau. And, do you hear? let him give you one for your pains.

Wai. Your honour's obedient! You'd have me attend every morning?

Mite. Without doubt: it would be madness to lose a minute, you know. [*Exit* WAI.

Enter MRS. CROCUS.

Well, Mrs. Crocus, let us see what you have brought me. Your last bouquet was as big as a broom, with a tulip strutting [*sticking*] up like a magistrate's mace, and, besides, made me look like a devil.

Cro. I hope your honour could find no fault with the flowers. It is true, the polyanthuses were a little pinched by the easterly winds, but for pip,

colour, and eye, I defy the whole parish of Fulham to match them.

Mite. Perhaps not; but it is not the flowers, but the mixture, I blame Why, here now, Mrs. Crocus, one should think you were out of your senses, to cram in this clump of jonquils!

Cro. I thought your honour was fond of their smell

Mite. Damn their smell! it is their colour I talk of. You know my complexion has been tinged by the East, and you bring me here a blaze of yellow, that gives me the jaundice. Look! do you see here, what a fine figure I cut? You might as well have tied me to a bundle of sun-flowers!

Cro. I beg pardon, your honour!

Mite. Pardon! there is no forgiving faults of this kind. Just so you served Harry Hectic; you stuck into his bosom a parcel of hyacinths, though the poor fellow's face is as pale as a primrose.

Cro. I did not know——

Mite. And there, at the opera, the poor creature sat in his side box, looking like one of the figures in the glass-cases in Westminster-Abbey; dead and dressed.

Cro. If gentlemen would but give directions, I would make it my study to suit them.

Mite. But that your cursed climate wo'n't let you do. Have you any pinks or carnations in bloom?

Cro. They are not in season, your honour. Lilies of the valley——

Mite. I hate the whole tribe! What, you want to dress me up like a corpse! When shall you have any rose-buds?

Cro. The latter end of the month, please your honour.

Mite. At any time you may call.

Cro. Your honour has no further commands?

Mite. None. You may send nosegays for my chairmen, as usual. [*Exit Mrs.* CROCUS.] Piccard! Here, take that garland away: I believe the woman thought she was dressing a May-pole. Make me a bouquet with the artificial flowers I brought from Milan.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Would your honour please to see Madam Match'em?

Mite. Introduce her this instant.

Enter MRS. MATCH'EM.

My dear Match'em! Well, what news from Cheapside?

Match. Bad enough; very near a total defeat.

Mite. How so? you were furnished with ample materials.

Match. But not of the right kind, please your honour. I have had but little intercourse with that part of the world; my business has chiefly lain on this side of the bar; and I was weak enough to think both cities alike.

Mite. And ar'n't they?

Match. No two nations can differ so widely! Though money is supposed the idol of merchants, their wives don't agree in the worship.

Mite. In that article I thought the whole world was united.

Match. No; they don't know what to do with their money; a pantheon subscription, or a masquerade ticket, is more negotiable there than a note from the bank.

Mite. What think you of a bracelet, or a well-fancied aigret?

Match. I should think they must make their way.

Mite. I have sent some rough diamonds to be polished in Holland; when they are returned, I will equip you, Match'em, with some of those toys.

Match. Toys? how light he makes of these things!—Bless your noble and generous soul! I believe for a trifle more I could have obtained Lady Lurcher last night.

Mite. Indeed?

Match. She has been pressed a good deal to discharge an old score, long due to a knight from the North; and play-debts, your honour knows, there is no paying in part: she seemed deeply distressed; and I really believe another hundred would have made up the sum.

Mite. And how came you not to advance it?

Match. I did not choose to exceed my commission; your honour knows the bill was only for five.

Mite. Oh, you should have immediately made it up; you know I never stint myself in these matters.

Match. Why, had I been in cash, I believe I should have ventured, your honour. If your honour approves, I have thought of a project that will save us both a good deal of trouble.

Mite. Communicate, good Mrs. Match'em!

Match. That I may not pester you with applications for every trifle I want, suppose you were to deposit a round sum in my hands.

Mite. What, Match'em, make you my banker for beauty? Ha, ha, ha!

Match. Exactly, your honour. Ha, ha, ha!

Mite Faith, Match'em, a very good conceit.

Match. You may depend on my punctuality in paying your drafts.

Mite. I don't harbour the least doubt of your honour.

Match. Would you have me proceed in Patty Parrington's business? She is expected from Bath in a week.

Mite. And what becomes of her aunt?

Match. That Argus is to be left in the country.

Mite. You had better suspend your operations for a while. Do you know, Mrs. Match'em, that I am a-going to be married.

Match. Married? your honour's pleased to be pleasant: that day I hope never to see.

Mite. The treaty wants nothing but her friends' ratification; and I think there is no danger of their withholding that.

Match. Nay, then, the matter is as good as concluded: I was always in dread of this fatal stroke!

Mite. But, Match'em, why should you be so averse to the measure?

Match. Can it be thought, that with dry eyes I could bear the loss of such a friend as your honour? I don't know how it is, but I am sure I never took such a fancy to any man in my life.

Mite. Nay, Match'em!

Match. Something so magnificent and princely in all you say or do, that a body has, as I may say, a pleasure in taking pains in your service.

Mite. Well, but, prithee, child——

Match. And then, when one has brought matters to bear, no after-reproaches, no grumblings from parties, such general satisfaction on all sides!

I am sure, since the death of my husband, as honest a man, except the thing he died for—

Mite. How came that about, Mrs. Match'em?

Match. Why, Kit was rather apt to be careless, and put a neighbour's name to a note without stopping to ask his consent.

Mite. Was that all?

Match. Nothing else;—since that day, I saw no mortal has caught my eye but your honour.

Mite. Really, Match'em?

Match. I can't say, neither, it was the charms of your person—though they are such as any lady might like—but it was the beauties of your mind, that made an impression upon me.

Mite. Nay, prithee, Match'em, dry up your tears! you distress me! Be persuaded you have nothing to fear.

Match. How!

Mite. Why, you don't suppose that I am prompted to this project by passion?

Match. No!

Mite. Pho! no; only wanted a wife to complete my establishment; just to adorn the head of my table.

Match. To stick up in your room, like any other fine piece of furniture?

Mite. Nothing else; as an antique bust or a picture.

Match. That alters the case.

Mite. Perhaps, I shall be confined a little at first; for, when you take or bury a wife, decency requires that you should keep your house for a week: after that time, you will find me, dear Match'em, all that you can wish.

Match. Ah! that is more than your honour can tell. I have known some of my gentlemen, be-

fore marriage, make as firm and good resolutions not to have the least love or regard for their wives; but they have been seduced after all, and turned out the poorest tame family fools!

Mite. Indeed?

Match. Good for nothing at all.

Mite. That shall not be my case.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Your honour's levee is crowded.

Mite. I come. Piccard, give me my coat. I have had some thoughts of founding in this town a seraglio; they are of singular use in the Indies: do you think I could bring it to bear?

Match. Why, a customer of mine did formerly make an attempt; but he pursued too violent measures at first; wanted to confine the ladies against their consent; and that, too, in a country of freedom.

Mite. Oh, fy! How the best institutions may fail, for want of a man proper to manage!

Match. But your honour has had great experience. If you would bestow the direction on me—

Mite. Impossible, Match'em! in the East we never confide that office to your sex or complexion. I had some thoughts of importing three blacks from Bengal, who have been properly prepared for the service; but I sha'n't venture, till the point is determined, whether those creatures are to be considered as mere chattels or men. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—A Saloon.

Enter MAYOR, TOUCHIT, NATHAN, MOSES, *&c.*

Serv. Walk in, gentlemen! his honour will be presently here.

Tou. Do you see, Mr. Mayor? look about you! here are noble apartments!

Mayor. Very fine, very curious, indeed! But, after all, master Touchit, I am not so over-fond of these Nabobs; for my part, I had rather sell myself to somebody else.

Tou. And why so, Mr. Mayor?

Mayor. I don't know—they do a mortal deal of harm in the country: why, wherever any of them settles, it raises the price of provisions for thirty miles round. People rail at seasons and crops; in my opinion, it is all along with them there folks that things are so scarce.

Tou. Why, you talk like a fool! suppose they have mounted the beef and mutton a trifle; a'n't we obliged to them too for raising the value of boroughs? You should always set one against t'other.

Mayor. That, indeed, is nothing but fair. But how comes it about? and where do these here people get all their wealth?

Tou. The way is plain enough; from our settlements and possessions abroad.

Mayor. Oh, may be so. I've been often minded to ask you what sort of things them there settlements are; because why, as you know, I have never been beyond sea.

Tou. Oh, Mr. Mayor, I will explain that in a moment: why, here are a body of merchants that beg to be admitted as friends, and take possession of a small spot in a country, and carry on a beneficial commerce with the inoffensive and innocent people, to which they kindly give their consent.

Mayor. Don't you think now, that is very civil of them?

Tou. Doubtless. Upon which, Mr. Mayor, we

cunningly encroach, and fortify by little and by little, till at length, we growing too strong for the natives, we turn them out of their lands, and take possession of their money and jewels.

Mayor. And don't you think, 'Master Touchit, that is a little uncivil in us?

Tou. Oh, nothing at all: these people are but a little better than Tartars or Turks.

Mayor. No, no, Master Touchit; just the reverse; it is *they* have caught the Tartars in us.

Tou. Ha, ha, ha! well said, Mr. Mayor. But, hush! here comes his honour. Fall back!

Enter SIR MATTHEW MITE.

Mite. Oh, Nathan! are you there? you have split the stock, as I bid you?

Na. I vas punctually obey your directions.

Mite. And I shall be in no danger of losing my list?

Na. Dat is safe, your honour; we have noting to fear.

Mite. Moses Mendoza! you will take care to qualify Peter Pratewell and Counsellor Quibble? I shall want some speakers at the next General Court.

Moses. Please your honour, I shall be careful of dat.

Mite. How is the stock?

Moses. It vas got up the end of the veek.

Mite. Then sell out till you sink it two and a half. Has my advice been followed for burning the tea?

Moses. As to dat matter, I vas not inquire dat; I believe not.

Mite. So, that commodity will soon be a drug. The English are too proud to profit by the practice

of others. What would become of the spice trade, if the Dutch brought their whole growth to market?

Moses. Dat is very true. Your honour has no farder commands?

Mite. None at present, master Mendoza.

[*Exit* MENDOZA.

Na. For de next settlement, would your honour be de bull or de bear?

Mite. I shall send you my orders to Jonathan's. Oh, Nathan! did you tell that man in Berkshire I would buy his estate?

Na. Yes; but he say he has no mind, no occasion to sell it; dat de estate belong to great many faders before him.

Mite. Why, the man must be mad; did you tell him I had taken a fancy to the spot when I was but a boy?

Na. I vas tell him as much.

Mite. And that all the time I was in India my mind was bent upon the purchase?

Na. I vas say so.

Mite. And now I'm come home, am determined to buy it?

Na. I make use of de very vords.

Mite. Well then! what would the booby be at?

Na. I don't know.

Mite. Give the fellow four times the value, and bid him turn out in a month. [*To* TOUCHIT.] May I presume, sir, to ask who you are, and what your business may be?

Tou. My name, sir, is Touchit, and these gentlemen some friends and neighbours of *mine*. We are ordered by the Christian Club, of the borough of Bribe'em, to wait upon your honour, with a tender of the nomination of our two members at the ensuing election.

Mite. Sir, I accept their offer with pleasure; and am happy to find, notwithstanding all that has been said, that the union still subsists between Bengal and the ancient corporation of Bribe'em.

Tou. And if they ever are severed, I can assure your honour the Christian Club will not be to blame. Your honour understands me I hope?

Mite. Perfectly. Nor shall it, I promise you, be my fault, good Mr. Touchit. But, (you will forgive my curiosity, sir,) the name your club has adopted, has at first a whimsical sound; but you had your reasons, no doubt.

Tou. The very best in the world, please your honour: from our strict union and brotherly kindness, we hang together; like the primitive Christians too, we have all things in common.

Mite. In common! I don't apprehend you.

Tou. Why, please your honour, when the bargain is struck, and the deposit is made, as a proof that we love our neighbours as well as ourselves, we submit to an equal partition; no man has a larger share than another.

Mite. A most Christian-like dispensation!

Tou. Yes; in our borough all is unanimity now: formerly, we had nothing but discontents and heart-burnings amongst us; each man jealous and afraid that his neighbour got more and did better than himself.

Mite. Indeed!

Tou. Ay, and with reason sometimes. Why, I remember, at the election some time ago, when I took up my freedom, I could get but thirty guineas for a new pair of jack-boots; whilst Tom Ramskin over the way had a fifty-pound note for a pair of wash-leather breeches.

Mite. Very partial indeed!

Tou. So, upon the whole, we thought it best to unite.

Mite. Oh, much the best. Well, sir, you may assure your principals that I shall take care properly to acknowledge the service they do me.

Tou. No doubt, no doubt. But—will your honour step a little this way? Though no question can be made of your honour's keeping your word, yet it has always been the rule with our club to receive the proper acknowledgement before the service is done.

Mite. Ay, but, Mr. Touchit, suppose the service should never be done?

Tou. What, then, must become of our consciences? we are Christians, your honour.

Mite. True; but, Mr. Touchit, you remember the proverb?

Tou. What proverb, your honour?

Mite. There are two bad paymasters; those who pay before, and those who never pay.

Tou. True, your honour; but our club has always found, that those who don't pay before are sure never to pay.

Mite. How! impossible! the man who breaks his word with such faithful and honest adherents, deserves richly a halter. Gentlemen, in my opinion, he deserves to be hanged.

Tou. Hush! have a care what you say.

Mite. What is the matter?

Tou. You see the fat man that is behind; he will be the returning officer at the election.

Mite. What then?

Tou. On a gibbet, at the end of our town, there hangs a smuggler, for robbing the custom-house.

Mite. Well?

Tou. The mayor's own brother, your honour:

now, perhaps he may be jealous that you meant to throw some reflection on him or his family.

Mite. Not unlikely. I say, gentlemen, whoever violates his promise to such faithful friends as you are, in my poor opinion, deserves to be damned!

Tou. That's right! stick to that! for though the Christian club may have some fears of the gallows, they don't value damnation of a farthing.

Mite. Why should they, as it may be so long before any thing of that kind may happen, you know?

Tou. Good! good again! your honour takes us rightly, I see: I make no doubt it wo'n't be long before we come to a good understanding.

Mite. The sooner the better, good master Touchit; and, therefore, in one word, pray what are your terms?

Tou. Do you mean for one, or would your honour bargain for both?

Mite. Both, both.

Tou. Why, we could not have afforded you one under three thousand at least; but as your honour, as I may say, has a mind to deal in the gross, we shall charge you but five for both.

Mite. Oh fy! above the market, good Mr. Touchit!

Tou. Dog-cheap; neck-beef; a penny-loaf for a halfpenny! why, we had partly agreed to bring in Sir Christopher Quinze and Major Match'em for the very same money; but the Major has been a little unlucky at Almack's, and at present can't deposit the needful; but he says, however, if he should be successful at the next Newmarket meeting, he will faithfully abide by the bargain. But the turf, your honour knows, is but an uncertain estate, and so we can't depend upon him.

Mite. True. Well, sir, as I may soon have occasion for all the friends I can make, I shall haggle no longer; I accept your proposals: in the next room we will settle the terms.

Tou. Your honour will always find the Christians steady and firm. But, wo'n't your honour introduce us to his worship whilst we are here?

Mite. To his worship? to whom.

Tou. To the gentleman in black.

Mite. Worship! you are mad, Mr. Touchit! that is a slave I brought from the Indies.

Tou. Good lack! may be so! I did not know but the gentleman might belong to the tribe, who, we are told by the papers, conferred those splendid titles upon your honour in India.

Mite. Well, master Touchit, what then?

Tou. I thought it not unlikely, but, in return to that compliment, your honour might choose to make one of the family member for the corporation of Bribe'em.

Mite. Why, you would not submit to accept of a negro?

Tou. Our present members, for aught we know, may be of the same complexion, your honour; for we have never set eyes on them yet.

Mite. That's strange! but, after all, you could not think of electing a black?

Tou. That makes no difference to us: the Christian club has ever been persuaded, that a good candidate, like a good horse, can't be of a bad colour.

[*Exit with Friends.*

Enter THOMAS OLDHAM *and others.*

Mite. [*to* OLDHAM.] What is your business and name?

Tho. Oldham.

Mite. The brother of Sir John? I have heard of you: you are, if I mistake not, a merchant?

Tho. I have that honour, Sir Matthew.

Mite. Um! honour! well, sir; and what are your commands?

Tho. I wait on you in the name of my brother, with——

Mite. An answer to the message I sent him. When do we meet to finish the matter? It must be to-morrow or Sunday, for I shall be busy next week.

Tho. To-morrow?

Mite. Ay; it is not for a man like me to dangle and court, Mr. Oldham.

Tho. Why, to be plain, Sir Matthew, it would, I am afraid, be but losing your time.

Mite. Sir?

Tho. As there is not one in the family that seems the least inclined to favour your wish.

Mite. No? ha, ha, ha! that's pleasant enough! ha, ha, ha! and why not?

Tho. They are, Sir Matthew, no strangers to your great power and wealth; but corrupt as you may conceive this country to be, there are superior spirits living who would disdain an alliance with grandeur obtained at the expense of honour and virtue.

Mite. And what relation has this sentimental declaration to me?

Tho. My intention, Sir Matthew, was not to offend; I was desired to wait on you with a civil denial.

Mite. And you have faithfully discharged your commission.

Tho. Why, I am a man of plain manners, Sir Matthew; a supercilious air, or a sneer, will not prevent me from speaking my thoughts.

Mite. Perfectly right, and prodigiously prudent!—Well, sir; I hope it wo'n't be thought too presuming, if I desire to hear my sentence proceed from the mouth of the father and daughter.

Tho. By all means; I will wait on you thither.

Mite. That is not so convenient, at present. I have brought from Italy, antiques, some curious remains, which are to be deposited in the archives of this country: the *Antiquarian Society* have, in consequence, chosen me one of their body, and this is the hour of reception.

Tho. We shall see you in the course of the day?

Mite. At the close of the ceremony. Perhaps, I shall have something to urge, that may procure me some favour from your very respectable family.—Piccard, attend Mr. A—a—a to the door.

Tho. I guess your design. [*Exit.*

Mite. Who waits there?

Enter SERVANT.

Step to my attorney directly; bid him attend me within an hour at Oldham's, armed with all the powers I gave him. [*Exit* SERVANT. I will see if I can't bend to my will this sturdy race of insolent beggars!—After all, riches to a man who knows how to employ them are as useful in England as in any part of the East: there they gain us those ends in spite and defiance of law, which, with a proper agent, may here be obtained under the pretence and colour of law.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

The Antiquarian Society.

Sec. Sir Matthew Mite, preceded by his presents, will attend this honourable society this morning.

1 *Ant.* Is he apprised that an inauguration-speech is required, in which he is to express his love of vertù, and produce proofs of his antique erudition?

Sec. He has been apprised, and is rightly prepared.

2 *Ant.* Are the minutes of our last meeting fairly recorded and entered?

Sec. They are.

1 *Ant.* And the valuable antiques which have happily escaped the depredations of time ranged and registered rightly?

Sec. All in order.

2 *Ant.* As there are new acquisitions to the Society's stock, I think it right that the members should be instructed in their several natures and names.

1 *Ant.* By all means. Read the list!

Sec. "*Imprimis*, In a large glass-case, and fine preservation, the toe of the slipper of Cardinal Pandulpho, with which he kicked the breech of King John, at Swinstead-abbey, when he gave him absolution and penance."

2 *Ant.* A most noble remains!

1 *Ant.* An excellent antidote against the progress of Popery, as it proves the Pontiff's insolent abuse of his power.—Proceed.

Sec. "A pair of nut-crackers presented by Harry the Eighth to Anna Bullen on the eve of their nuptials; the wood supposed to be walnut."

1 *Ant.* Which proves that before the Reformation walnut-trees were planted in England!

Sec. "The cape of Queen Elizabeth's riding-hood, which she wore on a solemn festival, when carried behind Burleigh to Paul's; the cloth undoubted Kidderminster."

2 *Ant.* A most instructive lesson to us, as it proves that patriotic princess wore nothing but the manufactures of England!

Sec. "A cork-screw presented by Sir John Falstaff to Harry the Fifth, with a tobacco-stopper of Sir Walter Raleigh's, made of the stern of the ship in which he first compassed the globe; given to the Society by a clergyman from the North-riding of Yorkshire."

1 *Ant.* A rare instance of generosity, as they must have both been of singular use to the reverend donor himself!

Sec. "A curious collection, in regular and undoubted succession, of all the tickets of Islington turnpike, from its first institution to the twentieth of May."

2 *Ant.* Preserve them with care, as they may hereafter serve to illustrate that part of the English history.

Sec. "A wooden medal of Shakespeare, made from the mulberry-tree planted by himself; with a Queen Anne's farthing; from the manager of Drury-lane playhouse."

1 *Ant.* Has he received the Society's thanks?

Sec. They are sent.

Enter BEADLE.

Beadle. Sir Matthew Mite attends at the door.

1 *Ant.* Let him be admitted directly.

Enter SIR MATTHEW MITE, *preceeded by four Blacks; first Black bearing a large Book; second, a green Chamber-pot; third, some Lava from the Mountain Vesuvius; fourth, a Box. Sir Matthew takes his Seat; Secretary receives the first Present, and reads the Label.*

Sec. "Purchased of the Abbé Montini at Naples, for five hundred pounds, an illegible manuscript in Latin, containing the twelve books of Livy supposed to be lost."

Mite. This invaluable treasure was very near falling into the hands of the Pope, who designed to deposit it in the Vatican library, and I rescued it from idolatrous hands.

1 *Ant.* A pious, learned, and laudable purchase!

Sec. [*receives the second present, and reads the label.*] "A sarcophagus, or Roman urn, dug from the temple of Concord."

Mite. Supposed to have held the dust of Marc Antony's coachman.

Sec. [*receives the third present, and reads.*] "A large piece of the lava, thrown from the Vesuvian volcano, at the last great eruption."

Mite. By a chymical analysis, it will be easy to discover the constituent parts of this mass; which, by properly preparing it, will make it no difficult task to propagate burning mountains in England, if encouraged by premiums.

2 *Ant.* Which it will, no doubt.

Mite. Gentlemen! Not contented with collecting, for the use of my country, these inestimable relics, with a large catalogue of petrifactions, bones, beetles, and butterflies, contained in that box, [*pointing to the present borne by the fourth*

Black,] I have likewise laboured for the advancement of national knowledge: for which end, permit me to clear up some doubts relative to a material and interesting point in the English history. Let others toil to illumine the dark annals of Greece, or of Rome; my searches are sacred only to the service of Britain!

The point I mean to clear up, is an error crept into the life of that illustrious magistrate, the great Whittington, and his no-less eminent cat: and in this disquisition four material points are in question.

1st. Did Whittington ever exist?

2d. Was Whittington Lord-Mayor of London?

3d. Was he really possessed of a cat?

4th. Was that cat the source of his wealth?

That Whittington lived, no doubt can be made; that he was Lord-Mayor of London is equally true; but as to his cat, that, gentlemen, is the gordian knot to untie. And here, gentlemen, be it permitted me to define what a cat is. A cat is a domestic, whiskered, four-footed animal, whose employment is catching of mice; but let puss have been ever so subtle, let puss have been ever so successful, to what could puss's captures amount? no tanner can curry the skin of a mouse, no family make a meal of the meat; consequently, no cat could give Whittington his wealth. From whence, then, does this error proceed? be that my care to point out!

The commerce this worthy merchant carried on, was chiefly confined to our coasts; for this purpose, he constructed a vessel, which, from its agility and lightness, he aptly christened a cat. Nay, to this our day, gentlemen, all our coals from Newcastle are imported in nothing but cats.

From thence it appears, that it was not the whiskered, four-footed, mouse-killing cat, that was the source of the magistrate's wealth, but the coasting, sailing, coal-carrying cat; that, gentlemen, was Whittington's cat.

1 *Ant.* What a fund of learning!

2 *Ant.* Amasing acuteness of erudition!

1 *Ant.* Let this discovery be made public directly.

2 *Ant.* And the author mentioned with honour.

1 *Ant.* I make no doubt but the city of London will desire him to sit for his picture, or send him his freedom in a fifty-pound box.

2 *Ant.* The honour done their first magistrate richly deserves it.

1 *Ant.* Break we up this assembly, with a loud declaration that Sir Matthew Mite is equally skilled in arts as well as in arms.

2 *Ant.* *Tam mercurio quam marti.* [*Exe. Ant.*

Mite. Having thus discharged my debt to the public, I must attend to my private affairs. Will Rapine, my attorney, attend as I bid him?

Serv. He will be punctual, your honour.

Mite. Then drive to Hanover-square.

Putty. (*without*)—I will come in!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There's a little shabby fellow without, that insists on seeing your honour.

Mite. Why, who and what can he be?

Serv. He calls himself Putty, and says he went to school with your honour.

Serv. (*within.*) His honour don't know you!

Putty. I will come in! Not know me, you oaf! what should ail him? Why, I tell you we were bred up together from boys. Stand by, or I'll—

Enter PUTTY.

Hey! yes, it is—no, it a'n't—yes, it is Matthew Mite! Lord love your queer face! what a figure you cut! how you are altered! well, had I met with you by chance, I don't think I should ever have known you. I have had a deuced deal of work to get at you.

Mite. This is a lucky encounter!

Putty. There is a little fat fellow that opens the door at your house, was as pert as a 'prentice just out of his time: he would not give me the least inkling about you! and I should have returned to Shoreditch as wise as I came, if some folks who are gazing at the fine gilt coach in the street, hadn't told me 'twas yours. Well, Master Mite, things are mainly changed since we were boys at the *Blue-coat.** Who could have thought that you would have got so up in the world? for you know you were reckoned a dull one at school.

Serv. Friend, do you know who you talk to?

Putty. Yes, friend, much better than you do. I am told he is become a knight and a nabob—and what of all that? For your nabobs, they are but a kind of outlandish creatures that wo'n't pass current with us; and as to knights, we have a few of them in the city whom I dare speak to without doffing my hat. So, Mr. Scrapetrencher, let's have no more of your jaw.—I say, Mat, doesn't remember one Easter Tuesday, how you tipt the barrow-woman into Fleet-ditch, as we were going about with the hymns?

Mite. An anecdote that does me infinite honour!

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* Boys bred at this School (Christ's Hospital), usually retain, to old age, the warmest recollections of their cotemporaries, as "brother blues."

Putty. How all the folks laughed to see how bolt upright she stood on her head in the mud! ha! ha! ha! And one fifth of November, I shall never forget! how you frightened a preaching methodist tailor by throwing a cracker into the pulpit.

Mite. Another pretty exploit!

Putty. At every bounce, how poor Stitch capered and jumped! Ah! many's the merry freak we have had. For this I must say, though Mat was but bad at his book, for mischiefful matters there wasn't a more ingenous cuterer lad in the school.

Mite. Yes, I have got a fine reputation, I see.

Putty. Well, but Mat! what, be'st dumb? why doesn't speak to a school-fellow?

Mite. That at present is more than I'll own.—I fancy, Mr. A—a—a, you have made some mistake.

Putty. Some mistake!

Mite. I don't recollect that I ever had the honour to know you.

Putty. What, don't you remember Phil Putty?

Mite. No.

Putty. That was 'prentice to Master Gibson, the glazier, in Shoreditch?

Mite. No.

Putty. That, at the Blue-coat Hospital, has often saved your bacon by owning your pranks?

Mite. No.

Putty. No! What, then, mayhap you ben't Mat Mite, son of old John and Margery Mite, at the Sow and Sausage in St. Mary Axe, that took the tarts from the man in Pie-corner, and was sent beyond the sea, for fear worse should come on it?

Mite. You see, Mr. Putty, the glazier, if that is your name and profession, you are entirely out

in this matter, so you need not repeat your visits to me. [*Exit.*

Putty. Now, here's a pretty purse-proud son of a—— who, forsooth, because he is grown great by robbing the heathens, wo'n't own an old friend and acquaintance, and one, too, of the livery beside! Damme, the great Turk himself need not be ashamed to shake hands with a citizen! "Mr. Putty, the glazier!" well, what a pox am I the better for you? I'll be sworn our company has made more money by a single election at Brentford, than by all his exploits put together. [*Exit.*

SCENE.—SIR JOHN OLDHAM'S *House.*

Enter MR. THOMAS OLDHAM, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Tho. Sir Matthew Mite is not come?

Serv. No, sir.

Tho. Is Tom here?

Serv. Mr. Oldham is, I believe, with Miss, in the parlour.

Tho. Let him know I would see him. [*Exit* SERV.] Poor boy! nay, I sincerely grieve for them both! this disappointment, like an untimely frost, will hang heavy on their tender years. To conquer the first and finest feelings of nature is an arduous task.

Enter YOUNG OLDHAM.

So, Tom, still attached to this spot, I perceive.

Y. Old. Sir, I arrived but the instant before you.

Tho. Nay, child, I don't blame you. You are no stranger to the almost invincible bars that oppose your views regarding my niece; it would be therefore prudent, instead of indulging, to wean yourself by degrees.

Y. Old. Are there no hopes, then, sir, of subduing my aunt?

Tho. I see none: nay, perhaps, as matters now stand, compliance may be out of her power.

Y. Old. How is that possible, sir? out of her power!

Tho. I wo'n't anticipate: misfortunes come too soon of themselves; a short time will explain what I mean.

Y. Old. You alarm me! Would you condescend to instruct me, I hope, sir, I shall have discretion enough——

Tho. It would answer no end. I would have you both prepare for the worst: see your cousin again; and remember, this, perhaps, may be the last time of your meeting.

Y. Old. The last of our——

Tho. But Sophy is here; I must go in to Sir John. [THOMAS OLDHAM *bows low to* SOPHY, *and retires.*

Enter SOPHY.

Sophy. Sir, what can be the meaning of this? My uncle Oldham avoids me! you seem shocked! no additional misfortune, I hope.

Y. Old. My father has threatened me, in obscure terms, I confess, with the worst that can happen.

Sophy. How!

Y. Old. The total, nay, perhaps, immediate loss of my Sophy.

Sophy. From what cause?

Y. Old. That, in tenderness, he chose to conceal.

Sophy. But why make it a mystery? have you no guess?

Y. Old. Not the most distant conception. My

lady's dislike would hardly prompt her to such violent measures. I can't comprehend how this can possibly be; but yet my father has too firm, too manly a mind, to encourage or harbour vain fears.

Sophy. Here they come. I suppose the riddle will soon be explained.

Enter SIR JOHN, LADY, *and* THOMAS OLDHAM.

L. Old. But what motive could he have for demanding this whimsical interview? he could not doubt your credentials, or think his presence could be grateful to us?

Tho. I have delivered my message.

L. Old. Perhaps he depends on his rhetorical powers; I hear he has a good opinion of them. Stay, Sophy! Sir Matthew Mite, distrusting the message we begged your uncle to carry, desires to have it confirmed by ourselves; I fancy, child, you will do yourself no violence in rejecting this lover. He is an amiable swain, I confess!

Sophy. I shall be always happy in obeying your ladyship's orders.

L. Old. Are you sure of that, Sophy? a time may soon come for the trial.

Sir John. Well, in the main, I am glad of this meeting; it will not only put a final end to this business, but give us an opportunity of discussing other matters, my dear.

L. Old. Is that your opinion, Sir John? I fancy he will not be very fond of prolonging his visit.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Matthew Mite.

L. Old. Show him in!—Now, Sir John, be on your guard; support this scene with a dignity that becomes one of your birth and—

Sir John. Never fear my dignity, love. I warrant you I'll give him as good as he brings.

Enter SIR MATTHEW MITE.

Mite. I find the whole tribe is convened.—I hope I am not an intruder; but I confess the extraordinary answer I received from the mouth of this worthy citizen, to a message conveyed by my secretary, induced me to question its authenticity, unless confirmed by yourselves.

L. Old. And why should you think our reply so very extraordinary?

Mite. You must give me leave to smile at that question.

L. Old. A very decisive answer, I own!

Mite. You are, Lady Oldham, a woman of the world, and supposed not to be wanting in sense.

L. Old. Which this conduct of mine inclines you to doubt?

Mite. Why, to be plain, my condition and your own situation considered, prudence might have dictated a different reply.

L. Old. And yet, Sir Matthew, upon the maturest deliberation, all the parties, you see, persist in giving no other.

Mite. Is it so? You will permit me, Lady Oldham, to desire one of those reasons which influenced this august assembly upon the occasion?

L. Old. They will, I dare say, appear but trifling to you.

Mite. Let us have them, however.

L. Old. First, we think it right to have a little regard to *her* happiness, as she is indebted for her existence to us.

Mite. Which you think she risks in an union with me? [LADY OLDHAM *bows.*] And why so?

I have the means to procure her, madam, those enjoyments with which your sex is chiefly delighted.

L. Old. You will, Sir Matthew, pardon my weakness; but I would much rather see my child with a competence, nay, even reduced to an indigent state, than voluptuously rioting in pleasures that derive their source from the ruin of others.

Mite. Ruin! what, you, I find, adopt the popular prejudice, and conclude that every man that is rich is a villain!

L. Old. I only echo the voice of the public. Besides, I would wish my daughter a more solid establishment. The possessions arising from plunder very rarely are permanent; we every day see what has been treacherously and rapaciously gained, as profusely and full as rapidly squandered.

Mite. I am sorry, madam, to see one of your fashion concur in the common cry of the times; but such is the gratitude of this country to those who have given it dominion and wealth.

Tho. I could wish even that fact was well founded, Sir Matthew. Your riches, (which perhaps, too, are only ideal,) by introducing a general spirit of dissipation, have extinguished labour and industry, the slow, but sure source of national wealth.

Mite. To these refinements I have no time to reply. By one of your ladyship's hints I shall profit at least: I shall be a little more careful of the plunder I have made. Sir John Oldham, you recollect a small sum borrowed by you?

Sir John. I do.

Mite. The obligations for which are in my possession at present.

Sir John. I understand as much by your letter.

Mite. As I find there is an end of our treaty,

it would be right, I think, to discharge them directly.

Sir John. I cannot say that is quite so convenient; besides, I understood the party was to wait till the time that Jack comes of age.

Mite. I am told the law does not understand what is not clearly expressed. Besides, the probable event of your death, or the young gentleman's shyness to fulfil the agreement, are enough to put a man on his guard.

Tho. Now comes on the storm.

Mite. And, that my prudence may not suffer in that lady's opinion, I have taken some precautions which my attorney will more clearly unfold. Mr. Rapine!

Enter RAPINE.

You will explain this affair to Sir John: I am a military man, and quite a stranger to your legal manœuvres.

Rap. By command of my client, Sir Matthew, I have issued here a couple of writs.

L. Old. Sir John!

Sir John. What?

Rap. By one of which, plaintiff possesses the person, by the other, goods and chattels, of Sir John, the defendant.

Mite. A definition very clear and concise!

L. Old. Goods, sir! what, must I be turned out of my house?

Rap. No, madam; you may stay here till we sell, which perhaps mayn't happen these two days. We must, indeed, leave a few of our people, just to take care that there is nothing embezzled.

L. Old. A short respite, indeed! For a little time, I dare say, my brother Oldham will afford

us protection. Come, Sir John, nor let us indulge that monster's malice with a longer sight of our misery.

Rap. You, madam, are a wife, and may go where you please; but as to Sir John——

L. Old. Well!

Rap. He must not stir: We are answerable for the possession of him.

L. Old. Of him? a prisoner? then, indeed, is our ruin complete!

Sophy. Oh, uncle!—You have been pleased, sir, to express an affection for me: is it possible, sir, you can be so cruel, so unkind to my parents—

Mite. They are unkind to themselves.

Sophy. Let me plead for mercy! suspend but a little!—My uncle, you, sir, are wealthy too!—Indeed we are honest! you will not run the least risk.

Mite. There is a condition, miss, in which you have a right to command.

Sophy. Sir!

Mite. It is in your power, and that of your parents, to establish one common interest amongst us.

L. Old. Never! after rejecting, with the contempt they deserved, the first arrogant offers you made, do you suppose this fresh insult will gain us?

Mite. I am answered.—I presume, Mr. Rapine, there is no longer occasion for me?

Sophy. Stop, sir! Mr. Oldham teaches me what I should do. Can I see their distress? Heaven knows with what eagerness I would sacrifice my own peace, my own happiness, to procure them relief! [*Kneels to Sir* MATTHEW.

Tho. Rise, niece! for hope to soften that breast,

already made too callous by crime! I have long seen, sir, what your malice intended, and prepared myself to baffle its purpose. I am instructed, sir, in the amount of this man's demands on my brother. You will there find a sum more than sufficient to pay it.—And now, my dear sister, I hope you will please to allow a citizen may be useful sometimes.

Mite. Mr. Rapine, is this manœuvre according to law?

Rap. The law, Sir Matthew, always sleeps when satisfaction is made.

Mite. Does it? Our practice is different in the Mayor's Court at Calcutta.—I shall now make my bow; and leave this family, whom I wished to make happy in spite of themselves, soon to regret the fatal loss sustained by their obstinate folly.

Tho. Nor can it be long, before the wisdom of their choice will appear; as, by partaking of the spoil, they might have been involved in that vengeance, which, soon or late, cannot fail to fall on the head of the author: and, sir, notwithstanding your seeming security, perhaps the hour of retribution is near!

Mite. You must, Master Oldham, give me leave to laugh at your prophetic effusion. This is not Sparta, nor are these the chaste times of the Roman republic: now-a-days, riches possess, at least, one magical power, that, being rightly dispensed, they closely conceal the source from whence they proceeded: that wisdom, I hope never to want.—I am the obsequious servant of this respectable family! Adieu!—Come along, Rapine!

[*Exit with* RAPINE.

L. Old. Brother, what words can I use, or how can we thank you as we ought? Sir John! Sophy!

Tho. I am doubly paid, Lady Oldham, in supplying the want of my friends, and defeating the designs of a villain. As to the mere money, we citizens, indeed, are odd kind of folks, and always expect good security for what we advance.

L. Old. Sir John's person, his fortune, every—

Tho. Nay, nay, nay, upon this occasion we will not be troubled with land: if you, sister, will place as a pledge my fair cousin in the hands of my son——

L. Old. I freely resign her disposal to you.

Sir John. And I.

Tho. Then be happy, my children! And as to my young cousins within, I hope we shall be able to settle them without Sir Matthew's assistance: for, however praiseworthy the spirit of adventure may be, whoever keeps his post, and does his duty at home, will be found to render his country best service at last! [*Exeunt.*

THE BANKRUPT;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS.

REMARKS.

HIGHLY adapted to the circumstances of the times, this comedy could not fail of a favourable reception at its first representation, in 1773.

Foote's personification of Sir Robert Riscounter, the bankrupt, to whose misfortunes and integrity he gave the happiest effect, procured to this part the most unqualified applause; it was thought to bear close resemblance to the recent case of Sir George Fordyce and his immense mercantile failure, which, at that period, filled the town with wonder and dismay. His rejection of mal-advisers' evil counsels, and his domestic infelicity, are believed to happen too often, in certain degrees; though the venality and abuse of the Liberty of the Press, upon which the plot is made to hinge, is of every-day occurrence. Allowing for the alterations which a lapse of fifty years have effected in the details, the interview between Margin and his "Reporters," all arrogance on his part, and paltry shuffling and barefaced audacity on that of his employees, is a tolerably faithful piquant picture of modern periodical printing-office establishments. The arguments subsequently adduced *pro* and *con* for the freedom of the press, are common enough; and the final *éclaircissement* is singularly abrupt, and rather *jejune*. However, notwithstanding these and some minor defects, *the Bankrupt* realised the best hopes of its "*contriver*," and "paid twenty shillings in the pound," in full of all his expectations.

TO THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUIS OF GRANBY,

THE PATRON OF LETTERS,

THE HOPE AND ORNAMENT

OF HIS COUNTRY,

THIS COMEDY

IS DEDICATED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S MOST

DEVOTED AND OBLIGED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

SAMUEL FOOTE.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. Foote.

For wit's keen satire, and this laughing stage,
What theme so fruitful as a Bankrupt age?
For, not confin'd to commerce is the curse,
The head is near as empty as the purse;
Equally sunk our credit and our wit,
Nor is the sage more solvent than the cit.
All these——but soft, ere thus abroad we roam,
Were it not prudent first to look at home?
You, gentle sirs, have given me credit long,
And took my word for many an idle song;
But if exhausted, I give notes to-day—
For wit and humour which I cannot pay,
I must turn Bankrupt too, and hop away.
Unless, indeed, I modishly apply
For leave to sell my works by lottery.
Though few will favour, where's no cash to see 'em,
Poor hopes, that way to part with my Museum:
My old friend *Smirk*, indeed, may lend his aid,
And sell by auction all my stock-in-trade;
His placid features, and imploring eye,
May tempt, perhaps, the tardy town to buy;
His winning manner and his soft address,
To other sales of mine have given success.
But after all, my ever-honour'd friends,
On you alone my fate this night depends;
I've fought some battles, gain'd some victories here,
And little thought a culprit to appear

Before this house; but if resolv'd you go
To find me guilty, or to make me so,
To grant me neither wit, nor taste, nor sense,
Vain were my plea, and useless my defence.
But still, I will not steal, I will not beg,
Though I've a passport in this wooden leg,
But to my cot contentedly retire,
And stew my cabbage by my only fire;
Mean time, great sirs, my sentence yet unknown,
E'en as your justice be your candour shown,
And when you touch my honour, don't forget your own.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR ROBERT RISCOUNTER	*Mr. Foote.*
SIR JAMES BIDDULPH	*Mr. Aickin.*
PALAGE	*Mr. Palmer.*
RESOURCE	*Mr. Fearon.*
MARGIN	*Mr. Baddeley.*
ROBIN	*Mr. Whitfield.*
PHELIM O'FLAM	*Mr. Bannister.*
JAMES	*Mr. R. Palmer.*
SIR THOMAS TRADEWELL	*Mr. Davis.*
DINGY	*Mr. Griffiths.*
PEPPER	*Mr. Stephens.*
PLASTER	*Mr. Jones.*
RUMOUR	*Mr. Lloyd.*
CLERK	*Mr. Walters.*

WOMEN.

LADY RISCOUNTER	*Miss Sherry.*
LYDIA	*Mrs. Jewell.*
LUCY	*Miss Ambrose.*
KITTY	*Miss Platt.*

SCENE—The City.

THE BANKRUPT.

ACT THE FIRST.

Enter ROBIN *and* KITTY, *meeting.*

Rob. This letter and casket, with my master's most respectful compliments, you will, Kitty, with your own fair hands, deliver to Miss.

Kit. The casket is heavy—I suppose, Mr. Robin, this is what my lady calls the *burryfunalia?*

Rob. A small tribute, madam, to adorn the bride on the happy occasion.

Kit. What, then, I suppose you look upon this marriage as good as concluded?

Rob. Things are gone such a length, that not the least doubt can be made.

Kit. And yet, between the cup and the lip,—you remember the proverb?

Rob. One of the parties may die, to be sure, otherwise I don't know how—

Kit. No?

Rob. No: the young lady has not altered her mind?

Lit. Not to my knowledge.

Rob. What, Sir Robert Riscounter, her father? These curmudgeonly cits regard no ties, no

obligations when they have a higher interest in view. I suppose he has received larger proposals from some other party.

Kit. I have heard of no such thing.

Rob. Well, then, I am sure no impediment can arise from our quarter. My master, Sir James Biddulph, is too much a man of honour: besides, I know his whole soul is wrapped up in Miss Lydia.

Kit. He has given her pretty convincing proofs of his passion.

Rob. What, I suppose the malicious mother-in-law, who, I know, hates Miss, and has a damned deal of art, in conjunction with Miss Lucy, that precious pledge of her former husband's affections, has contrived to throw some confounded rub in the way.

Kit. Bless me, Mr. Robin, I don't know what you mean, I am sure I said nothing at all.

Rob. No?

Kit. No. But only that things which are not done, may perhaps never be done; there is nothing certain but death.

Rob. Very moral, Miss Kitty—there is some mystery, if I could but get at it, but this slut is as cunning—I will have a trial, however. [*Aside.*] Nay, for the matter of that, I can have, Mrs. Kitty, no interest at all in this match: there is so much confinement and form, even in the most fashionable families, that a *single service* is best suited to me, especially, too, that now I am got into most of the clubs: there is one circumstance I shall most feelingly regret: that I own, will greatly touch me.

Kit. And, pray, what may that be, Mr. Robin?

Rob. Not living under the same roof with Miss Kitty. I made no doubt, madam, but your for-

tunes would follow your mistress's, and, in that case, I thought to soften the rigours of my captivity, in your agreeable converse.

Kit. Really, Mr. Robin? Well, I protest, I did not—

Rob. And when our mutual endeavours had procured for us a small independence, I flattered myself with gently sliding the down-hill of life, subject to no other will but Miss Kitty's.

Kit. What a difference between him and the servants of this side the bar?—Really, Mr. Robin, you talk nearly as well as your master.

Rob. And no wonder, madam, since love, the same deity, inspires us both.

Kit. How quick you are in your rippartees, Mr. Robin? are you good at a riddle?

Rob. If you mean the making them, no; it is too low a species of writing for me: for novels; I have now and then some dealings with *Noble*,* and have by me a genteel comedy of one act, that is thought to have a good deal of merit.

Kit. And, pray, when does it make its appearance?

Rob. Why, faith, I don't know; all the managers are such scribblers, that they wo'n't give a genius fair play, but engross the whole stage to themselves.

Kit. Very selfish, indeed. Well, Mr. Robin, though you wo'n't make a riddle, I will, which (as my lady expects of me) you may study to expound by yourself. This match wo'n't take place, and yet are none of the parties to blame; I may live in the same house with you, though I

* *Francis Noble:* he was the Mæcenas of novel writers, and ten pounds for a brace of volumes the extent of his liberality.

should leave my young mistress's service, and the loss of my place may perhaps be the making of my fortune. So, adieu.

Rob. Nay, but Miss Kitty, one word, if you please.

Kit. Not a syllable; go, and puzzle your brains. But take this, for your comfort, that if you cannot at present make out my meaning, a little time will fully explain it. [*Exit.*

Rob. So skittish and shy, Mrs. Pert! but, if our next meeting does not bring forth this secret, you are no true chambermaid, nor I fit for a *valet de chambre*. All reserve amongst servants is flat treason against the community. Every well-disciplined domestic is bound in honour, however careful of his own, to reveal all family secrets to the rest of the tribe. But I must brush off, for here comes my lady. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY RISCOUNTER *and* JAMES.

Lady Ris. And he has promised that the paragraph shall appear in the paper this morning?

James. I am afraid, madam, there is no doubt of his keeping his word.

Lady Ris. Afraid! what a pusillanimous creature art thou!

James. As your ladyship, by what means I know not, is acquainted with my veneration for Miss, you cannot wonder at my feeling some compunction in becoming an instrument to ruin her fame.

Lady Ris. Why, the fellow is a fool: don't you consider, that her ruin, as you call it, will be your rise?

James. Perhaps so, madam, but how can I—

Lady Ris. You love Lydia, you say?

James. More than I have words to express.

Lady Ris. And Sir James Biddulph you detest, as a successful rival, no doubt?

James. Except on that account I have no reason.

Lady Ris. And what better reason can any man have? don't you know, that the two great master passions that give birth to all we do, is hatred and love?

James. Without doubt.

Lady Ris. The mind would stagnate without them; and are not you particularly fortunate, in being able, by one masterly stroke, to gratify both?

James. Were I, indeed, sure of succeeding with Miss?

Lady Ris. You have every probable chance in your favour: in the first place, it is impossible, consistently with his honour, that Sir James Biddulph can pursue his designs upon Lydia.

James. May be not.

Lady Ris. Nor will any proper suitable person think of her when her reputation is gone.

James. Too true, I believe.

Lady Ris. Then, who so likely to succeed as yourself? as you are the party suspected, common policy will point out you for her husband.

James. But will Miss Lydia be brought to submit?

Lady Ris. She can have no choice but her father's. Him, I can easily manage, and, possibly, as a douceur, prevail on him to augment the very considerable fortune she derives from her aunt; never fear, things are in a very good way.

James. I must submit all to your ladyship's management.

Lady Ris. Your part will be easy enough; you will have nothing to do but be passive.

Enter KITTY *and* LUCY, *with a Newspaper in her Hand.*

Lu. Here, madam, here it is, and placed in a most conspicuous part of the paper.

Lady Ris. And no alteration?

Lu. Not a word. In the exact form that we sent it.

L. Ris. Prithee read it, my dear.

Lu. [*reads.*] "We can assure the public, from the very best authority, that the beautiful daughter, by a former venture, of an eminent banker, not far from the Monument, was surprised by the servants, in a most critical situation, with Mr. J——s, clerk to her father."

Lady Ris. Right, right.

Lu. "And what heightens her crime, she was on the eve of being married to an amiable young baronet, at the west end of the town, the apparent object of her own choice."

Lady Ris. Finely circumstantial; it is impossible for any body to err in the person.

Lu. Not in nature; now, I think, we shall pull down Miss Prudery's pride.

Lady Ris. It cannot fail. Kitty, you have carefully perused the instructions I gave you.

Kit. Please your ladyship, I have them by heart.

Lady Ris. Don't be too forward in replying to any question they put to you; but answer with a kind of reluctant hesitation, as if the facts were forced from your mouth.

Kit. Never fear, madam.

Lady Ris. Don't forget to make frequent professions of the great love and affection you bear your young mistress, that you could not have

thought it, sha'n't know whom to trust for the future; ready to lay down your life for your lady.

Lu. Suggest, too, that some strange arts must have been used, or you are convinced she could never have been brought to submit.

Kit. I shall carefully, madam, obey your directions.

Lady Ris. And squeeze out a tear now and then, if you can.

Lu. Or, if they wo'n't come, rub your eyes till they are red.

Lady Ris. Right; this will give probability to all that you say.

Lu. Otherwise, the young hypocrite's behaviour has been always so specious, those who know her wo'n't credit the story.

Kit. Suppose, madam, Sir James Biddulph, or any body else, should make any inquiry?

Lady Ris. Answer none of their questions; your tenderness for Lydia will be a proper excuse; to your master's authority, indeed, you are obliged to submit. You comprehend me?

Kit. Perfectly, madam.

Lady Ris. Within, I will give you further instructions; and remember, Kitty, your fortune is at stake: success, in this one instance, will make you easy for life.

Kit. The best I can do will be but a poor return for your ladyship's goodness.

Lady Ris. Send the newspaper in to your master. [*Exit* KITTY.] You have, James, seen none of our people this morning.

James. I have not entered the shop.

Lady Ris. Then, get out of the way as fast as you can; secrete yourself somewhere; that will give

additional strength to the story. Your withdrawing will argue a consciousness arising from guilt.

James. That I most sufficiently feel.

Lady Ris. Success will soon drown the remembrance. [*Exit* JAMES.] That fellow must not appear; his mind is so maukish, that, should he be confronted with Lydia, he would betray our whole plot in an instant.

Lu. It is a wonder, madam, how you have got all this address: instead of a private family, you are formed to govern a country.

Lady Ris. Why, I think, I may, without vanity, say that I derived from nature some talents for this kind of intrigue; but to the care of my education I chiefly owe what I am.

Lu. Indeed, madam!

Lady Ris. My father was a stock-broker, you know, and your father, my first husband, an attorney, my dear.

Lu. True, madam.

Lady Ris. And, as they had no reserve, they kept no secrets from me; I must have been a blockhead, indeed, not to have made some progress in their professional arts.

Lu. True, madam.

Lady Ris. But, after defeating Sir James Biddulph's designs upon Lydia, to turn the tide of his affections, and substitute you in her room, will, Lucy, be the great political effort.

Lu. From your ladyship's great abilities there cannot be the least doubt of success: besides, her father is so hasty and violent that, I am sure, he will never be brought to forgive her.

Lady Ris. There is no relying on that; no mortal was ever so mutable. Our various [*variable*]

climate is not so inconstant as he. Sir Robert is choleric enough, but, then, as he is provoked without cause, he is appeased without reason; one word will inflame, another extinguish the fire; whom one minute he persecutes, the next he protects. His joy, grief, love, hatred, are in eternal rotation, and I have been often tempted to think his mind a machine, moved only by the immediate objects before it.

Lu. And yet, madam, how completely you rule him!

Lady Ris. No longer, child, than I stay by his side; after that, the first person has him that sees him, and all my impressions are effaced in an instant.

Enter KITTY.

Kit. My master has got at the paragraph.

Lady Ris. Has he so? well, and—

Kit. He inquired, madam, for you, and, putting his finger here, bid me show this directly to your ladyship.

Lady Ris. He did not suspect, then, that I had seen it before?

Kit. Not in the least—but here he comes, tottering and trembling—with his face as white as a sheet.

Lady Ris. Get you behind.

Enter SIR ROBERT RISCOUNTER.

Sir Rob. Well, my dear, have you read——

Lady Ris. Sir Robert, I have.

Sir Rob. Have you so? Well, and pray what do you think? Did you ever see such an audacious, abominable, impudent, scandalous piece of scurrility? Zounds, give me my cane, I will go directly to the rascally printer's, and——

Lady Ris. But suppose, Sir Robert, the printer should not be passive, and, in return for the strokes of your cane, should leave the marks of his nails in your face?

Sir Rob. There may be something in that, as your ladyship says; I have heard some of the rogues are strong and sturdy enough.

Lady Ris. And, first, let us be sure who the party is the paragraph points at.

Sir Rob. Hey! what d'ye say? points at? why, it is as clear as the sun—[*takes the Paper*]—banker—Monument—first venture—zounds, they might as well have published my name and my daughter's at length.

Lady Ris. Why, to say truth, the marks are pretty strong; but still let us coolly consider the case. Kitty, go down; Lucy, my dear, leave Sir Robert and me together a little.

[*Exeunt* LUCY *and* KITTY.

Sir Rob. Ay, go, child; prithee go. I do not believe, Lady Riscounter, that there is a single man in the Ward who would have the least hesitation in pronouncing who was—

Lady Ris. Well, but do not let us be in such hurry to make the application ourselves; the malice of others will be ready enough to do that: let me see, is there no other banker lives near the Monument?

Sir Rob. Not that I know; but suppose there should; here, the west end of the town, and the amiable baronet, puts the matter out of dispute: hey, what d'ye say?—

Lady Ris. That, indeed; but, hold a little, does not it mention the name of the paramour? Ay, here it is, J—s.

Sir Rob. J—s.

Lady Ris. J—s, I don't recollect any body that visits here whose name those letters will suit.

Sir Rob. There is no Jones, nor Joddrell—poo, pox, that is an L—; nor Jennings, nor Jarvis, nor Jenkins, nor——

Lady Ris. Not that I recollect.

Sir Rob. There is Jacobs, the Jew, but he is as old as one of the partriarchs, with his beard down to his breeches; they can never mean him.

Lady Ris. Poo! that is too absurb to suppose: but, stay, are there no other distinguishing marks? um, um—— "J—s, clerk of her father's;" I own that passage escaped me.

Sir Rob. Hey! what did you say? and me, too, one of my clerks! who can that be? J—s, the two letters belonging to a Christian name.

Lady Ris. So I should imagine.

Sir Rob. Zounds! it can never be James.

Lady Ris. James!

Sir Rob. An impudent, eternal, damned son of a bitch! this is the consequence of taking beggars into your bosom.

Lady Ris. But, Sir Robert——

Sir Rob. Don't mention it, madam; was not he the thirteenth son of a starved curate in Essex, ragged as their colts, and knew about as much as one of their calves—did not I feed, clothe, take him into my house, treat him as if he had been ——and, in return, the villain, to dishonour my child!

Lady Ris. You are too impatient, Sir Robert; why should you fix all at once upon James? I have observed the lad's behaviour to be discreet and modest; nay, indeed, rather shy and reserved.

Sir Rob. That is true enough, I must own. I never remarked the boy to be presumptuous and

forward, like some of our pert prigs of the city; but, as your Ladyship observes, rather bashful and shy. No, no, it can never be him.

Lady Ris. Not but I have known people with that specious outside appearance, carry minds as malignant and daring——

Sir Rob. The cursedest sly dogs upon earth: hypocrisy is the finest veil for a villain. I always suspected there was something bad behind his solemn sanctified look: I don't believe the scoundrel ever swore an oath since he came into the house. There is a villain for you, my dear.

Lady Ris. Nay, but my dear, let us conclude nothing rashly. Suppose you send for James up, and sift him a little?

Sir Rob. That mayn't be amiss—who's there?

Lady Ris. Not that I believe he will be ever brought to confess.

Sir Rob. He! no, no, curse him. Him! you will never catch him at that: you might as well hope to extract sugar from salt. I may as well let him alone.

Lady Ris. Let us see him, however.

Enter a SERVANT.

Sir Rob. True. Let James know that I want him, but don't tell the fellow I am angry, and so get him to skulk out of the way.

Serv. I did not know that your worship was angry, till you told me your——

Sir Rob. I tell you! my dear, did I say any such thing? You prying, impertinent——Go, and do as you are bid. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Lady Ris. I don't think it unlikely, Sir Robert, but some idle acquaintance, without considering the consequences, may have inserted this mali-

cious article, by way of pleasantry, as a kind of jest upon James.

Sir Rob. Nothing so probable, Lady Riscounter: this town swarms with such forward, frivolous puppies.

Enter SERVANT.

Well, where is James?

Serv. Sir, he is not within.

Sir Rob. What, is the rascal run off?

Lady Ris. No, my dear, perhaps only gone out with some bills for acceptance.

Sir Rob. Like enough. When will he be back?

Serv. The rest of the clerks have not seen him to-day.

Sir Rob. Not seen him to-day? what, are all of them blind, then?

Lady Ris. Nay, Sir Robert, perhaps he has not been in the shop.

Serv. So they say. [*Exit.*

Sir Rob. Then they could not see him, indeed. Not in the shop! nay, then the business is clear; guilt, guilt, flight is full as bad as confession.

Lady Ris. It does look suspicious, I own; but then, nothing ill can happen without your daughter's concurrence, and you have not the least doubt of her.

Sir Rob. Doubt! hey!

Lady Ris. And, in fact, have nothing to fear.

Sir Rob. Fear! doubt! I hope your Ladyship has no more doubts than myself.

Lady Ris. Why should I? how does this affair concern me?

Sir Rob. As it concerns me, Lady Riscounter; do you suppose I should have been indifferent if such a charge had fallen on Lucy.

Lady Ris. Such a charge can never fall upon my daughter Lucy.

Sir Rob. Full as soon as on my daughter Lydia.

Lady Ris. I am not, Sir Robert, so certain of that.

Sir Rob. Lady Riscounter, you begin to alarm me; you know more of this matter than you are willing to own.

Lady Ris. Whatever I know, Sir Robert, I am resolved not to communicate.

Sir Rob. And why not?

Lady Ris. Whatever a mother-in-law says, the good-natured world always imputes to malice.

Sir Rob. Generally the case, I must own. But to me you may, nay, you ought to reveal.

Lady Ris. Since you are so earnest, I own some rumours have reached me.

Sir Rob. Of what kind?

Lady Ris. You will pardon me there; if you will examine your daughter's maid, Kitty; she, I am told, can satisfy all your inquiries.

Sir Rob. An artful baggage, I know. For heaven's sake, my dear, send her hither directly.

Lady Ris. But not the least mention of me. [*Exit.*

Sir Rob. Very well. I never observed the least correspondence between Lydia and James; but what of that? they would take good care, I warrant, to conceal it from me.

Enter KITTY.

So, I find you were the go-between, the little infamous agent in this cursed——

Kit. Sir Robert——

Sir Rob. You must have been a volunteer; I, am sure, James was not able to bribe you, for he is as poor as a pillaged black in Bengal.

Kit. Really, sir, I don't understand you.

Sir Rob. You mean, hussey, you wo'n't: come, you may as well tell me all the particulars concerning Lydia and James; with the main article, you see, I am already acquainted.

Kit. Don't press me, pray, sir; I would rather die than say anything to hurt my young mistress. [*Cries.*

Sir Rob. Nay, prithee, Kitty, don't cry; you are a good girl, and love my daughter, I see.

Kit. And not without reason, for she has been the kindest, best——

Sir Rob. Nay, till now, she was ever an amiable girl; but here, child, you will do her a capital service.

Kit. Indeed, sir.

Sir Rob. For, if her affections are fixed upon James, though I may lament, I shall not oppose him.

Kit. Since that is the case, I can't say, but, early one morning, hearing a noise in Miss Lydia's apartment, I stepped down to see what was the matter.

Sir Rob. Well?

Kit. Just as I got to the foot of the stairs, her door opened, and out came Mr. James.

Sir Rob. Did he? and why did not you alarm the house, and seize the villain directly?

Kit. That, sir, would have ruined my lady's reputation at once.

Sir Rob. True enough, you did wisely. Did the fellow perceive you?

Kit. Yes, sir, and made me a sign to be silent.

Sir Rob. I don't doubt it.

Kit. Indeed, he came to me two hours after, told me he had a passion for Miss, never could get an opportunity of disclosing his mind, and des-

perate, at finding his hopes on the point of being ruined, he had stolen that morning into her chamber, humbly to implore her compassion and pity.

Sir Rob. He chose a fine time and place for the purpose.

Kit. On his knees he desired I would not disclose to any mortal what I had seen.

Sir Rob. Which you should not have done.

Kit. He was too late in his caution; not five minutes before I had told it to Mrs. Hemshot, Miss Lucy's maid.

Sir Rob. No wonder, then, the story is public.

Kit. I am certain sure my young mistress is innocent, for Mr. James vowed and declared he was all upon honour.

Sir Rob. The malice of mankind will never be brought to believe it; you may go. [*Exit* KITTY.] So the girl's reputation is gone, and a retreat from the world the only choice that is left her: all my calamities are come upon me at once; my child ruined, and, from the general distress, my own fame and fortune on the brink of destruction: the attorney and broker will be instantly here to contrive means for propping my tottering credit. Am I in a condition to think of expedients, or to listen to—

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A card, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir Rob. [*reads.*] "Sir James Biddulph's compliments to Sir Robert Riscounter, and, if convenient, will take the liberty to wait on him this morning." Prepared, as I expected; our misfortunes have reached him, and he comes to break off the match; he is not to be blamed. This rash, inconsiderate—I'll to her, and, if she has the least

atom of feeling, I'll——And yet how could the poor girl help his intrusion? she might be ignorant; and yet the fellow without encouragement would never have dared to——Yet the impudence of some men is amazing, and so, indeed, is the folly of women: the original fault must be his. But her after-compliance makes her equally guilty, for, had she disapproved, she would have revealed the fact to her mother or me. That, that, condemns her at once; I will to her directly, and find out the full extent of her guilt. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

MISS LUCY *and* MISS LYDIA *discovered.*

Lu. To us, indeed, who are encumbered with fathers and mothers, marriage is a convenient business enough.

Lyd. And why, on that account, my dear Lucy?

Lu. As it makes one the entire mistress of one's time, and one is accountable to no mortal for what one says or does.

Lyd. What, Lucy, not to your husband?

Lu. Nay, don't be prudish, my dear: you are going back to the days of Queen Bess; who talks now of obedience and duty? ridiculous! her majesty's old fardingale is not more out of fashion.

Lyd. No!

Lu. No: one reads in books, indeed, of nuptial ties and conjugal love; mere obsolete stuff! modern marriages are mere matters of interest.

Lyd. Interest!

Lu. Ay, child; for instance, now, Sir Thomas Perkins, our neighbour, finding that Miss Williams has a good parcel of land, which, being con-

tiguous to his estate, will be very proper for him to possess, immediately sends his rent-roll a courting to hers. The parchments are produced on both sides, and no impediments, that is, incumbrance appearing, a couple of lawyers marry the manors together.

Lyd. Without the least regard to the persons?

Lu. Poo, *persons!* they are considered, child, as mansion-houses upon the estates, which one lives in, or neglects, just as they happen to be convenient or not.

Lyd. But suppose, Lucy, as in mine, there should happen to be no land in the case.

Lu. Then, child, the bargain is altered: you deposit so much money, and he grants you such an annuity; a mere Smithfield bargain, that is all.

Lyd. A pretty picture you give me of marriage. But this is all raillery, Lucy; I am sure, you would never submit to this barter and sale.

Lu. I should do like the rest of the world. We must take things as we find them. You are not so foolish as to be fond of Sir James Biddulph, my dear.

Lyd. Fond? the expression is strong; you must imagine I prefer him to the rest of ———

Lu. Why, as to his appearance, it must be owned, that the mansion is a pretty modern structure enough, well-built, and prettily finished: I can't indeed say his upper story is furnished quite to my taste.

Lyd. Nay, Lucy, now you are unjust; the whole world concur in giving him sense.

Lu. Nay, that article is not very material. If I had him, that is a part of his house with which I should hold very little communication, my dear. But, however, you love him?

Lyd. Or, I am sure, I never would have him.

Lu. And, I suppose, if any accident was to break off this match it would make you very unhappy.

Lyd. Can you doubt it, my dear?

Lu. There is one evil that attends these ridiculous contracts.

Lyd. You don't look upon love, then, as an essential ingredient?

Lu. Ha! ha! ha! silly and singular: do you know, Lydia, why Love is always painted as blind?

Lyd. There are many causes assigned by the poets.

Lu. But not one has given the true one,—because the little rogue shuts our eyes to our interests.

Lyd. Fy, Lucy, where could you get these narrow and libertine notions?

Lu. A little more experience will tell you. But here comes Sir Robert: not a word of what has passed.

Lyd. I shall, my dear Lucy, for your sake, endeavour to forget all you have said.

Enter SIR ROBERT RISCOUNTER.

Sir Rob. Lucy, you may go down. [*Exit* LUCY.] After what has passed, you will not be surprised that I insist upon your immediately quitting my house.

Lyd. Quitting the house, sir!

Sir Rob. Your fortune is independent and large; you will, no doubt, be happy in escaping from the observing eye of a father.—I will be cool, and desire only an answer to a very few questions. Since the death of your mother (who is happy in having escaped the knowledge of this infamous business) have I been ever wanting in any act of paternal affection?

Lyd. For heaven's sake, sir, what can be the meaning of ——

Sir Rob. Come, no evasions, but answer, briefly, yes or no, to my questions.

Lyd. No, sir.

Sir Rob. After my first care to educate you fit for the world, has it not been my principal study to settle you properly in it?

Lyd. Most assuredly, sir?

Sir Rob. And, knowing to what temptations girls at your age are exposed, did I not seek out a man of rank, honour, and fortune, to be your protector and guardian for life?

Lyd. I confess it.

Sir Rob. Did you ever express the least dislike to Sir James Biddulph's addresses?

Lyd. Never.

Sir Rob. How could you, then, so far forget what you owe to me, and yourself, as privately to harbour and encourage a passion——

Lyd. I am confounded.

Sir Rob. For an object, too, unsuitable in every respect: for a mere creature of charity!

Lyd. Charity!

Sir Rob. Ay, for it was compassion to the father's numerous family that induced me to take James into my house.

Lyd. James! what of him? or what relation, sir, can he have to me?

Sir Rob. This is astonishing in a girl of her years. What, then, you know nothing of this fellow's affections?

Lyd. For me?

Sir Rob. Ay, for you. No billet-doux, no private meetings, no stealing into your chamber before the servants were out of their beds.

Lyd. Amazing! and who, sir, has dared to insinuate—

Sir Rob. Insinuate! why the tale is the talk of the town: all the morning papers are full on't.

Lyd. What can, sir, be the meaning of this? is it possible you can think, sir, your daughter so abandoned, so lost——

Sir Rob. Hey!

Lyd. Recollect, dear sir, I beseech you, have I, in the whole course of my life, ever once dared to deceive you?

Sir Rob. Why, child, I can't say that you have. But, in this case, there is such positive proof.

Lyd. Of what kind, I beseech you?

Sir Rob. Facts, facts, well attested; so don't pretend to deny.

Lyd. Attested! by whom?

Sir Rob. Their names are needless at present. But what motive or interest could any one have to invent or propagate.

Lyd. None, that I can discover; but, however strong the appearance, if either in thought, word, or deed, there has any thing, either criminal or culpable, passed between me and——

Sir Rob. What, no declarations? no interviews?

Lyd. No more than with any other man in your service.

Sir Rob. Astonishing!

Lyd. If the contrary can be made to appear, abandon me, sir, at once, to that world already so prepossessed to my prejudice, the greatest misfortune that can ever befall me.

Sir Rob. Well, child, rise; I can't help giving credit to what you aver. But how to persuade the rest of——

Enter SERVANT.

Somebody wants me? As I expected. Sir James Biddulph, I reckon.

Serv. No, sir, a couple of gentlemen, who say they came by appointment.

Sir Rob. I guess who they are. Another bad business. Show them into the parlour. [*Exit* SERVANT.] You don't know half your father's afflictions—go, child, go into your chamber.

Lyd. I hope my father believes me.

Sir Rob. I do, I do. As soon as I have despatched these gentlemen, I will see you again.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE—A Parlour.

Enter PILLAGE *and* RESOURCE.

Pil. Ay, take my word for it, Mr. Resource, in the whole round of the law, and, thank Heaven, the dominions are pretty extensive, there is not a nicer road to hit than the region of Bankrupts.

Res. I should have thought it a turnpike, for you see how easily even a country attorney can find it.

Pil. Pshaw, what, amongst manufacturers and meagre mechanics? fellows not worth powder and shot; and yet these paltry provincials, Master Resource, are often obliged to solicit my aid.

Res. Indeed!

Pil. Why, t'other day, a poor dog, over head and ears in debt, from the country, was recommended to me by a client: the fellow had scraped together all he could get, and came up to town, with a view of running beyond sea, but I stopped him directly.

Res. Really?

Pil. O, ay, in a couple of months, washed him as white as a sheep that is just shorn.

Res. How did you bring it about?

Pil. Easy enough. Made him take a house in Cheapside, called him a citizen, in the London Gazette, and his name of John Madge, (being as common as carrots,) not a soul in the country suspected that it was he.

Res. How should they?

Pil. Passed a few necessary notes to get him number and value, white-washed him, and sent him home to his wife.

Res. Cleanly and cleverly done.

Pil. When the country chaps brought in their bills, he drew out of his pocket a certificate, and gave them a receipt in full for all demands.

Res. How the loobies must have looked!

Pil. Chop-fallen, no doubt; but he is in business again.

Res. He is?

Pil. O yes, and, I hear, does very well. For I left him two hundred out of the six he brought with him, to begin the world with credit afresh.

Res. Very generous, indeed, Mr. Pillage.

Pil. Oh! a trifling affair, got little by it!—for the matter of that, a mere *statute* is not much in itself.

Res. Ay! well, I thought it brought pretty perquisites with it.

Pil. No, no; it is a good hot-bed, indeed, to raise chaucery suits in.

Res. Ay, that is a produce that deserves propagation.

Pil. What, I see you have found a remedy for

Master Monk, of the Minories? I thought his was an incurable case.

Res. Onlys kinned o'er the sore, Master Pillage, it will soon break out again.

Pil. What were the means that you used?

Res. Got some friends of mine to advance him cash on a project.

Pil. Of what kind?

Res. A scheme of his to monopolize sprats and potatoes.

Pil. And it took?

Res. Oh! there was no danger of that. The people of this country are always ready to bite at a bubble.

Pil. Will it hold?

Res. Pshaw! We shall break before the season for sprats, and, as to the potatoes, we had laid in a ship load or two.

Pil. For which you procured a good price?

Res. Not a sous. They are all now in our cellars in Southwark, and have shot out branches as tall as the trees in the Park.

Pil. Ha! ha! ha! but *apropos*, can you guess Sir Robert's business with us?

Res. Very near, I believe.

Pil. What, the house is not a-tumbling?

Res. A pretty large crack.

Pil. Which he wants our assistance to plaster. Why, I thought the knight was as firm as a rock.

Res. I knew better things. I saw the mansion was daily decaying. Hush, here he comes.

Enter SIR ROBERT, *followed by a* CLERK.

Sir Rob. As we have effects in our hands, accept the bills, to be sure. But how to discharge

them when they are due!—So, gentlemen, I have sent for you, to beg your assistance.

Pil. Sir Robert, we shall be very happy to serve you, if you will but tell us how.

Sir Rob. Why, to deal plainly, gentlemen, my affairs are come to a crisis, and, without some substantial and speedy assistance, my credit will quickly expire.

Pil. You surprise me: I never guessed it in danger. Pray, Sir Robert, what brought on the disease, was it an alley-fever, or a gradual decay?

Sir Rob. A complication of causes. Not but I could have weathered them all, had the house in Holland but stood: their failure must be followed by mine.

Pil. What, Van Swieten's?

Sir Rob. Have you heard any thing of him to-day?

Pil. No doubt, I believe, of their stopping; their bills were offered at Garraway's under forty per cent. As your name is not blown upon yet, suppose you coin a couple of quires! don't you think the circulation might serve you?

Sir Rob. No, that mint is exhausted, and private paper returned to its primitive value. My real case can be no longer concealed. I must stop, and should be glad of your advice how to manage the matter.

Pil. There are two methods in use. The choice will depend on how your affairs stand with the world.

Sir Rob. Bitter bad, Mr. Pillage.

Pil. I guessed as much, by your sending for us. They treat us, Master Resource, like a couple of quacks, never apply but in desperate cases.

Res. But in all diseases there are different degrees.

Pil. True; for instance, if you find you are pretty near on a par, with, perhaps, a small balance per contra, summon your creditors, lay your conditions fully before them, convince them you have a fund to answer all their demands, and crave a respite for three or four years.

Sir Rob. Just to call in my debts, and make the most of my other effects?

Res. True; as the English merchants have a good deal of milk in their blood, that is a favour rarely refused.

Sir Rob. This, Master Pillage, will be only deferring the evil.

Pil. That is, Sir Robert, as you manage the cards. Don't you see that the length of time, with the want or wish of ready money for trade, will dispose the bulk of your creditors to sell their debts at a loss of thirty or forty per cent?

Sir Rob. True.

Res. No contemptible sum, when a man's dealings are large.

Sir Rob. But how shall I profit by ——

Pil. What hinders you from privately buying the debts?

Sir Rob. That, indeed ——

Res. A fine fortune saved out of the fire.

Pil. True. And, now we talk of the fire, for a present supply, you may burn a warehouse or two, after it has been gutted of all its contents.

Res. And recover the full amount on the policy.

Pil. Did you never try that?

Res. No, I don't think he has done any thing in the fire way yet; have you, Sir Robert?

Sir Rob. Never once came into my head.

Pil. May be not; oh! for a fertile brain; there are many means to be used; but what d'ye say to my plan?

Sir Rob. What, the summoning scheme? I am so involved, that I am afraid that project will never prevail.

Pil. Then you have nothing left but a statute.

Sir Rob. But, if my certificate should not be granted?

Pil. That is my proper business, Sir Robert. If we find your creditors inclined to be crusty, there will be no difficulty in creating demands to get number and value.

Sir Rob. That will swell my debts to a monstrous amount.

Res. So much the more for your honour; consider you are a knight; and your dignity demands you should fail for a capital sum.

Sir Rob. Does it?

Pil. To be sure. Why, you would not sneak into the Gazette like a Birmingham button-maker.

Res. Oh, fy!

Pil. He would never after be able to show his head upon 'Change.

Res. Never, never.

Pil. And, then, you know, what with the portable stuff, such as jewels or cash, that he himself may secrete, and the dividends that fall to the share of his friends, which they will, doubtless, restore—

Res. He will be fit to begin the world again with *éclat.*

Pil. In a much better condition than ever.

Res. And his children's children will have reason to thank him.

Sir Rob. But, is there not some danger in concealing the *portable stuff*, as you call it?

Pil. Not in the least. Besides, to colour the business, you may collec a purse of light guineas, with an old battered family watch, and deliver them to the commissioners, on your last examination.

Res. That will give an air of integrity.

Sir Rob. You seem to think, then, gentlemen, that it is the duty of every honest merchant to break once, at least, in his life, for the good of his family.

Res. Not the least question of that.

Pil. Every day's practice confirms it. Well, Sir Robert, when shall I provide you the tackle?

Sir Rob. The tackle!

Pil. In about a month or six weeks, I think, you may be made fit to appear in the papers.

Sir Rob. In the Gazette, as a bankrupt?

Res. Aye, but then no time must be lost.

Pil. Not a moment, for should they smoke his design——

Sir Rob. Gentlemen, I must decline your assistance.

Pil. How?

Sir Rob. For, without considering the private injury I may do to particular persons, this mischievous method must soon affect the whole mercantile world.

Pil. Why, what has that——

Sir Rob. Mutual confidence is the very cement of commerce; that weakened, the whole structure must fall to the ground.

Res. Hey!

Sir Rob. From the practice of these infamous arts, as it is impossible they can be concealed,

what suspicions, what jealousies must every man in trade entertain?

Pil. How!

Sir Rob. What an injury, besides, to those in my unhappy condition? the risks and losses unavoidably connected with commerce procure the unsuccessful trader, generally, the compassion, sometimes the friendly aid, of those of his order.

Res. We know that well enough.

Sir Rob. But, when bankruptcy becomes a lucrative traffic, and men are found to fail with a view of making their fortunes, the unhappy and fraudulent will be confounded together, and punishment fall on his head, who has a title to pity.

Pil. The man's mad.

Sir Rob. Perhaps, I myself am a sacrifice to those very arts you have recommended so warmly. But there the mischief shall end. Men may suffer from my calamities, but they never shall by my crimes. [*Exit.*

Pil. Did you ever meet with such a squeamish old fool? what could he mean by sending for us?

Res. Who can tell? his head's turned, I suppose.

Pil. I thought we had him sure; but how nimbly he has slipped through our fingers!

Res. Necessity will soon bring him back to our hook. He is shy for the present, but, I warrant, he will bite by and by.

Pil. Or we shall lose a capital prize.

Res. Indeed, should his friends interpose, and matters be compounded without us.

Pil. That I have a sure way to prevent. Before an hour is past, I will tear such a rent in his robe as I defy all the botchers in Europe to mend.

Res. By what means?

Pil. I know he is in the receipt of some government money; I will take care to saddle him with *an extent.*

Res. That will do.

Ril. I shall only just go and take out a commission against five *macaronies,* who are joint annuitants to a couple of Jews.

Res. But how can you lug them into a statute? they are no dealers, you know.

Pil. No dealers? yes, but they are.

Res. Aye, of what kind?

Pil. Why, why, they are dealers of cards.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY RISCOUNTER *and* SIR JAMES BIDDULPH.

Lady Ris. If you will walk in, Sir James; Sir Robert is a little busy at present, but he will wait upon you directly.

Sir J. I have no call, madam, that prevents my attending his leisure.

Lady Ris. I fear the design of this visit, Sir James, is of a different nature from those we have lately received.

Sir J. I came, madam, to offer my aid in detecting and punishing an infamous calumny that has made its way to the public this morning.

Lady Ris. But reports of this kind, when despised and neglected, gradually die of themselves. It is a most unlucky affair, I confess.

Sir J. Unlucky! most false and atrocious. I hope, madam, we shall be able to discover its author.

Lady Ris. As to that, it is scarce worth the inquiry.

Sir J. How, madam!

Lady Ris. We have family reasons, Sir James, for wishing to draw a veil over——

Sir J. A veil! I am astonished, Lady Riscounter!

Lady Ris. The loss of your alliance, indeed, which now we dare neither expect nor desire, has mortified us all not a little. If any other means could be found to form a connexion between us and a person of your merit and rank, there is nothing, I am sure, I should so ardently wish.

Sir J. Your ladyship is most exceedingly kind.

Lady Ris. I hope the whole family, especially myself and daughter, are not, through the error of one, to be punished with the loss of your friendship.

Sir J. You do me infinite honour.

Lady Ris. Indeed, my Lucy, upon this occasion, felt chiefly for you; for though, perhaps, not so imposing and specious as the girl whose lapse we lament, she has great goodness of heart, and a proper sense of your worth.

Sir J. Miss Lucy is most prodigiously——

Lady Ris. But Sir Robert's door opens, and as my presence may not be so proper upon this occasion, I take my leave, with the hopes of soon receiving a visit.

Sir J. I shall be happy, madam, in seizing every occasion——your ladyship's——[*Exit* LADY RISCOUNTER.] What can be the meaning of this? She seems to confirm and credit the infamous story. Sir Robert, I suppose, will explain it.

Enter SIR ROBERT.

Sir Rob. Sir James, I scarce know how to accost you; but the confusion I feel at the unhappy cause of your visit.

Sir J. Indeed, Sir Robert, I own myself greatly

perplexed. I entered your house full of the warmest resentment, and prepared to take every active part in my power; but your lady has dropped some hints, as if you wished to stifle all further inquiry. Pray, Sir Robert, be candid and open. This, sir, I think, I have right to demand.

Sir Rob. Doubtless. Nor do I wish to conceal: there is room for suspicion, I own; so far Lady Riscounter is right; but yet, Lydia——

Sir J. You have then seen her, Sir Robert——

Sir Rob. Not ten minutes ago. Her surprise seemed so sincere, and so artless, and——

Sir J. Without doubt——

Sir Rob. And such strong marks of truth, both in her words and her looks, that I confess—— perhaps, it was a fatherly weakness, I could not help giving credit to all that she said.

Sir J. You did her but justice, I am sure. I will pawn my life upon her honour and faith.

Sir Rob. But yet, how to reconcile—for, Sir James, I will be impartial; some accounts I have had——

Sir J. Time can only do that. Deep laid designs are not discovered at once. If we can but get at the clue.——And what steps have you taken? Have you been or sent to the printer's?

Sir Rob. No; I did think of going, but my lady persuaded me, that the step would be wrong.

Sir J. For which she had very good reasons, no doubt. Will you give me leave to accompany you thither?

Sir Rob. If you think it right.

Sir J. The very first thing you should do.

Sir Rob. But should not we consult my lady about it?

Sir J. The very last thing you should do.

Sir Rob. And why so?

Sir J. I must beg to conceal my reasons at present. I, too, have my suspicions, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. You have?

Sir J. Which I fancy you will soon find to be better founded that those of your family.

Sir Rob. Not unlikely, Sir James.

Sir J. Come, sir, my chariot is ready.

Sir Rob. I attend you, Sir James. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

Enter ROBIN *and a Servant of* SIR ROBERT'S.

Rob. My service to Miss Kitty, and I should be happy to have the honour of her ear a moment.

Ser. Of her ear!

Rob. These low fellows know nothing of the phrases in fashion, mere Vandals and *goats:* but I must accommodate myself to their country. Will you tell Miss Kitty Combrush that I should be glad to speak with her when she is at leisure?

Ser. Now I understand what you mean, that will I, Master Robin. [*Exit.*

Rob. Damned provoking, however, to have our ship sunk just as we were entering the port; this could not happen but by the contrivance of some of the crew: our captain, too, is most horribly hurt. This jade, I am convinced, is in the whole of the plot; but her own art, and the skill of her prompter, will make it difficult to get at the bottom.

Enter KITTY.

Kit. Bless me, Mr. Robin, after what has passed, I little expected to see you again at our house.

Rob. What injustice both to me and yourself!

Kit. How so, Mr. Robin?

Rob. To your powerful attractions and my proper discernment.

Kit. I did not know I had any such things, Mr. Robin.

Rob. Infinite! but, above all, your penetration is the most surprising to me. The conjuror in the Old Bailey is a fool compared to Miss Kitty. You are absolutely as knowing as one of the Civils, if the latter part of your prediction was but as fully accomplished.

Kit. What was that?

Rob. Our cohabitation in the same house, notwithstanding——

Kit. Time may bring that about, Mr. Robin.

Rob. I don't comprehend how that can happen.

Kit. No! why, to make your master amends for the loss of Miss Lydia, suppose we were to give him Miss Lucy——

Rob. D'ye call that making my master amends?

Kit. She is a good showy girl, and her fortune——

Rob. Will be no temptation to him; I know he detests her.

Rit. Indeed!

Rob. Cordially. So, that if that be the only means, I have nothing left but despair. Oh! Miss Kitty, think what misery!—that tender frame has a tear of pity, I'm sure;—to be deprived of the warmest wish of my life, to be cut off for ever——

Rit. And do you really think as you say?

Rob. Nothing but an amiable ignorance of your own charms could for a moment induce you to doubt it.

Kit. Suppose, then, Mr. Robin, we were to live under our own roof, instead of that of another; do'n't you think it would be mending the matter?

Rob. It would be Elysium, my angel. But how to get at the means?

Kit. If that is your objection, they may be easily found.

Rob. Does my lovely Kitty think I can have any other?

Kit. Then, since that is the case, Mr. Robin, it is but right I should explain to you what I meant by my riddle this morning. But see that we are safe.

Rob. Not a soul.

Kit. You must know, then, that this whole affair of Miss Lydia is my lady's contrivance.

Rob. What, is that whole story a fiction?

Kit. A mere flam; nothing else; and to bring about Sir James's marriage with Lucy, her motive.

Rob. I conceive.

Kit. Now, as the project would not do without my assistance, my lady gave me (here it is stuck in my stays) a note for five hundred pounds, if the match is broke off; and a thousand, should Miss Lucy's take place.

Rob. Hum—hum—hum—five hundred—hum—hum—Rebecca Riscounter—it is just as you say.

Kit. Now, as matters stand, you see I am entitled to the first five hundred directly, and, with your assistance, perhaps, the other may follow.

Rob. Not unlikely. But hold a little, dear Kitty, a little caution may not be amiss. This mistress of yours is a damned artful woman; she has tricked others, and wo'n't scruple cheating of you.

Kit. I don't understand you.

Rob. It is not quite clear that this note is a good one.

Kit. How!

Rob. I mean such a one as she will be obliged hereafter to pay.

Kit. Then the business shall be blown up in an instant.

Rob. Too late. She will only laugh at you when her ends are obtained.

Kit. Then what steps can we take?

Rob. There is an old master of mine, who lives in Brick-court, in the Temple, as cunning a cur as ever hanged an innocent man, or saved a rogue from the gallows. I'll run and ask his opinion.

Kit. But won't that be betraying our secret?

Rob. Counsellors, like confessors, are bound not to reveal their clients' confession: besides, I can easily conceal the name of the party.

Kit. You will come immediately back?

Rob. In an instant, unless I have your leave to go a step further.

Kit. Further.

Rob. To Doctors' Commons, for a little bit of parchment, that will soon unite us for ever.

Kit. O, law! you are in a vast prodigious great hurry; but, I think, Mr. Robin, you must do as you please.

Rob. Thus let me acknowledge your kind condescension. For a moment, then, my dear Kitty, adieu. [*Exit* KITTY.] So, now I have the means in my power to resettle all our matters again.

[*Exit.*

SCENE—A Printer's.

MARGIN *discovered, with Newspapers, Account-Books, &c.*

Mar. September the 9th. Sold twelve hundred and thirty. June the 20th. Two thousand and six.

Good increase for the time, considering, too, that the winter has been pretty pacific: dabbled but little in treasons, and not remarkably scurrilous, unless, indeed, in a few personal cases. We must season higher to keep up the demand. Writers in journals, like rope-dancers, to engage the public attention, must venture their necks every step they take. The pleasure people feel, arises from the risks that we run—what's the matter?

Enter DINGEY.

Din. Mr Hyson has left the answer to his last letter on East-India affairs.

Mar. A lazy rascal: now his letter is forgot, he comes with an answer. Besides, the subject is stale. Return it again. Are all our people in waiting?

Din. The Attorney-General to the paper, that answers the law-cases, is not come yet.

Mar. Oh, that's *Ben Bondem*, the bailiff; prudently done; perhaps, he has a writ against one of our authors—Bid them enter, and call over their names.

Din. Walk in, gentlemen.

Enter PEPPER, PLASTER, RUMOUR, FORGE'EM, FIBBER, COMMA, CAUSTIC, O'FLAM, *and others.*

Din. Politicians, pro and con. Messieurs Pepper and Plaster.

Pep. and Pla. Here.

Mar. Pepper and Plaster, as both the houses are up, I shall adjourn your political warfare till their meeting again.

Pep. Don't you think the public would bear one skirmish more before we close the campaign? I have a trimmer here in my hand.

Pla. To which I have as tart a retort.

Mar. No, no; enough for the present. It is, Plaster, the proper timing the subject that gives success to our labours. The conductor of a newspaper, like a good cook, should always serve up things in their season: who eats oysters in June? Plays and parliament-houses are winter provisions.

Pep. Then half the satire and salt will be lost: besides, if the great man should happen to die, or go out.

Mar. Pshaw! it will do as well for the great man that comes in. Political papers should bear vamping, like sermons; change but the application and text, and they will suit all persons and seasons.

Pla. True enough; but, mean time, what can we turn to; for we shall be quite out of work?

Mar. I warrant you if you are not idle, there's business enough; the press teems with fresh publications—Histories, translations, voyages—

Pep. That take up as much time to read as to make.

Mar. And, what with letters from Paris or Spa, inundations, elopements, dismal effects of thunder and lightning, remarkable causes at country assizes, and with changing the ministry now and then, you will have employment enough for the summer.

Pla. And so enter upon our old trade in the winter.

Mar. Ay; or, for variety, as it must be tiresome to take always one side, you, Pepper, may go over to administration, and Plaster will join opposition. The novelty may, perhaps, give fresh spirits to both.

Pep. With all my heart. A bold writer has now no encouragement to sharpen his pen. I have known the day when there was no difficulty

in getting a lodging in Newgate; but now, all I can say, wo'n't procure me a warrant from a Westminster justice.

Mar. You say right, hard times, master Pepper, for persecution is the very life and soul of our trade: but, don't despair, who knows how soon matters may mend? gentlemen, you may draw back.—Read the next.

Din. Critics—Thomas Comma and Christopher Caustic.

Mar. Where are they?

Din. As you could not find them in constant employment, they are engaged by *the great* to do the articles in the Monthly Reviews.

Mar. I thought they were done by Dr. Doubtful, the deist.

Din. Formerly, but now he deals in manuscript sermons, and writes religious essays for one of the journals.

Mar. Then he will soon sink. I foresaw what would come of his dramming. Go on.

Din. Collectors of paragraphs, Roger Rumour and Phelim O'Flam.

Ru. and Flam. Here.

Din. Fibber and Forge'em, composers and makers of dicto.

Fib. and Forge. Here.

Mar. Well, Rumour, what have you brought for the press?

Ru. I have been able to bring you no positives.

Mar. How! no positives?

Ru. Not one. I have a probability from the court end of the town; and two good *supposes* out of the city.

Mar. Hand them here—[*reads.*] "It is probable that, if the King of Prussia should join the

Czarina, France will send a fleet into the Mediterranean, which, by giving umbrage to the maritime powers, will involve Spain, by its family compact: to which, if Austria should refuse to accede, there may be a powerful diversion in Poland, made conjunctly by Sweden and Denmark. And if Sardinia and Sicily abide by the treaties, the German princes can never be neuter; Italy will become the seat of war, and all Europe be soon set in a flame."—Vastly well, Master Rumour, finely confused, and very alarming. Dingey, give him a shilling for this. I hope no other paper has got it?

Ru. O, fy, did you ever know me guilty of such a ——

Mar. True, true, now let us see your supposes —[*reads.*] "It is supposed, if Alderman Mango should surrender his gown, he will be succeeded by Mr. Deputy Drylips, and if my Lord Mayor should continue ill of the gout, it is supposed the *swan-hopping* will cease for this season."—That last suppose is fudged in; why would you cram these upon me for a couple?

Ru. As distinct as can be.

Mar. Fy, remember our bargain. You agreed to do the court of alderman always for sixpence.

Ru. What, if a common-hall should be called?

Mar. Oh! then you are to have three-pence a motion, I know that very well: I am sure no gentleman can accuse me of being sneaking. Dingey, give him sixpence for his supposes. Well, Phelim O'Flam, any deaths in your district?

O'Flam. The devil a one.

Mar. How! none?

O'Flam. O, yes, a parcel of nobodies, that died worth nothing at all; fellows that can't pay for

a funeral. Upon my conscience, I can't think what becomes of the folks, for my part; I believe, all the people who live in town fall down dead in the country, and then, too, since Doctor Despatch is gone to Bath, patients linger so long.

Mar. Indeed!

O'Flam. To be sure they do. Why, I waited at the Jolly Topers a matter of two days and a half for the last breath of Lady Dy Dropsy, for fear some other collector should catch it.

Mar. A long time, indeed.

O'Flam. Wasn't it, considering that she had two consultations besides, devilish tough? Mr. Margin, I shall quit the mortality walk, so provide yourself as soon as you can.

Mar. I hope not.

O'Flam. Why, what will I do? I am sure the deaths wo'n't keep me alive; you see I am already stripped to my shroud; since November, the suicide season, I have not got salt to my porridge.

Enter SIR THOMAS TRADEWELL.

Sir Tho. Is your name Matthew Margin?

Mar. It is, and what then?

Sir Tho. Then, pray, what right had you to kill me in your last Saturday's paper?

Mar. Kill you!

Sir Tho. Ay, sir, here the article is: surely the law has some punishment for such insolent rascals as you!

Mar. Punishment! and for what? but, after all, what injury have you sustained?

Sir Tho. Infinite. All my agents are come post out of the country, my house is crowded with cousins, to be present at the opening of my will,

and there has been (as it is known she has a very good jointure) no less than three proposals of marriage already made to my relict.

Mar. Let me look at the paragraph. [*Reads.* "Last night, after eating a hearty supper, died suddenly, with his mouth full of custard, Sir Thomas Tradewell, knight, an amiable companion, an affectionate relation, and a friend to the poor." —O'Flam, this is some blunder of yours; for you see, here the gentleman is, and alive.

O'Flam. So he says, but the devil a one in this case would I believe but himself; because why, I was told it by Jeremy O'Turlough, his own body chairman, my dear! and, by the same token, I treated him with a pint of porter for the good news.

Sir Tho. Vastly obliged to you, Mr. O'Flam, but I have nothing to do with this wretched fellow; it is you, Margin, shall answer for this.

Mar. Why, Sir Thomas, it is impossible but now and then we must kill a man by mistake. And, in some measure, to make amends, you see what a good character the paper has given you.

Sir Tho. Character!

Mar. Ay, sir, I can tell you I have had a crown for putting in many a worse.

O'Flam. Ay, Sir Thomas, consider of that, only think what a comfort it is to live long enough after you are dead to read such a good account of yourself in the paper.

Sir Tho. Ha! ha! ha! what a ridiculous rascal! but I would advise you, gentlemen, not to take such liberties with me for the future.

[*Exit.*

O'Flam. Indeed, and we wo'n't; and I here give Mr. Margin my word, that you sha'n't die

again as long as you live, unless, indeed, we get it from under your own hand.

Enter SIR ROBERT RISCOUNTER *and* SIR JAMES BIDDULPH.

Sir Rob. Where is this Margin, this impudent, rascally printer?

Mar. Hey day! what's the matter now?

Sir J. Curb your choler, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. A pretty fellow, indeed, that every man's and woman's reputation must be subject to the power of his poisonous pen.

Sir J. A little patience, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. A land of liberty this! I will maintain it, the tyranny exercised by that fellow and those of his tribe is more despotic and galling than the most absolute monarch's in Asia.

Sir J. Well, but——

Sir Rob. Their thrones claim a right only over your persons and property, whilst this mongrel, squatting upon his joint stool, by a single line, proscribes and ruins your reputation at once.

Sir J. Sir Robert, let me crave——

Sir Rob. And no situation is secure from their insults. I wonder every man is not afraid to peep into a paper, as it is more than probable he may meet with a paragraph that will make him unhappy for the rest of his life.

Mar. But, gentlemen, what is all this business about?

Sir Rob. About? zounds, sir, what right had you to ruin my daughter?

Mar. I! I know nothing of you, nor your daughter?

Sir Rob. Sir James Biddulph, you have it, produce the paper.

Sir J. There is no occasion for that, the affair is so recent I dare say the gentleman will remember the passage; this, sir, is the banker, the father, with whose daughter you was pleased to take those insolent freedoms this morning.

Sir Rob. And this, sir, the amiable baronet, from the west end of the town.

Mar. I recollect. Well, gentlemen, if you have brought any paragraphs to contradict the report, I am ready to insert them directly.

Sir Rob. And so, you rascal, you want us to furnish fresh food for your paper?

Mar. I do all I can to keep my scales even; the charge hangs heavy here; on the other side you may throw in the defence, then see which will weigh down the other.

Sir Rob. Indeed, Sir James Biddulph, if he does that——

Sir J. That! can that paltry expedient atone for his crime? Will the snow that is sullied recover its lustre? So tender and delicate, Sir Robert, is the fame of a lady, that, once tainted, it is tarnished for ever.

Sir Rob. True enough.

Mar. I could bear no ill-will to your daughter, as I know nothing about her.

Sir Rob. Indeed, Sir James, I don't see how he could.

Sir J. Is his being the instrument of another man's malice a sufficient excuse?

Sir Rob. So far from it, that it enhances the guilt. Zounds, Sir James, you are a parliament man, why don't you put an end to the practice?

Mar. Ay, let them attack the press, if——

Sir Rob. Have a care of that; no, no, that must not be done.

Sir J. No man, Sir Robert, honours that sacred shield of freedom more than myself.

Sir Rob. I dare say.

Sir J. But I would not have it serve to shelter these pests, who point their poisoned arrows against the peace of mankind.

Sir Rob. By no means in the world. Let them be dragged from behind it directly.

Mar. Ay, do destroy the watchful dogs that guard and cover your flocks.

Sir J. You guard! you cover!

Mar. Ay, who but us alarm the nation when bad designs are on foot?

Sir Rob. In that respect, they are very useful, no doubt.

Sir J. Are they, therefore, entitled to give the alarm, when no such design is intended?

Sir Rob. By no means. A pack of factious, infamous scoundrels!

Mar. It is we that supply the defects of the laws.

Sir J. You!

Mar. By stigmatizing those offenders that they cannot reach.

Sir Rob. That, indeed, serves to keep the guilty in awe.

Sir J. And is a pretence for making the innocent the butts of their malice.

Sir Rob. True, true; all is fish that comes to their nets.

Sir J. Besides, their slander is scattered so generally, and with so little discretion, that the deformity of vice is destroyed.

Sir Rob. True.

Sir J. Bad men are made worse by becoming totally callous, and even the good rendered careless

to that source of patriotism, that pride of virtue, the public opinion.

Sir Rob. And they are much in the right on't.

Mar. What, you are a courtier, I reckon; no wonder you wish the press was demolished.

Sir J. If ever that happens, to such miscreants as you it will be owing; nor will it surprize me, if all orders concur to give up a great public benefit for the sake and security of private honour and peace.

Sir Rob. Nor me neither.

Mar. You would consent, then, to surrender the press?

Sir Rob. I would sooner consent to be hanged.

Sir J. And its unbounded license continue?

Sir Rob. I would much rather see it on fire.

Mar. With respect to its general use——

Sir Rob. Not the smallest doubt can be made.

Sir J. But, Sir Robert, then the abuse——

Sir Rob. Is what no mortal can bear.

Mar. But, Sir Robert, you would but just now—

Sir Rob. I confess it, I did.

Sir J. Ay, but that was, Sir Robert, because—

Sir Rob. For no other reason in life.

Mar. My observation you allowed to be—

Sir Rob. Pointed.

Sir J. And my reply—

Sir Rob. Conclusive as could be.

Mar. But then—

Sir Rob. To be sure.

Sir J. Because why.

Sir Rob. You are quite in the right.

O'Flam. Upon my soul, they have got the old gentleman into such puzzleation, that I don't believe he knows what he wishes himself. Stand by and let me clear up this matter a little. Harkee,

Mr. Sir Robert, if I understand your maning at all, it is, that, provided people could be prevented from publishing, you are willing the press should be free.

Sir Rob. That was my meaning, no doubt.

O'Flam. Upon my conscience, and nothing but reason. There, I believe, we are all of us agreed. How seldom would people differ if once we could get them to be all of a mind! And now this difference is whole and composed, let me try if I can't make up the other. I understand here, old gentleman, you have had a daughter abused.

Sir Rob. Most foully.

O'Flam. And you want to know who was the author?

Sir Rob. That was my sole business here.

O'Flam. Then why could not you say so at first, without all this bothering and bawling? Well, Master Margin, come, give the old buck satisfaction.

Mar. It was anonymous.

O'Flam. Upon my soul, and I thought so. That is the most damnedst, impudent son of a bitch, he had like to have brought me into three or four scrapes, by fathering his lies upon me.

Sir J. Will you give us leave to look at the hand?

Mar. Freely, this is the paper.

Sir J. Sir Robert, do you recollect to have seen this writing before?

Sir Rob. It is James's; I know it as well as my own: here are his B's, his G's, and his T's.

Sir J. So I guessed. Will you trust the paper with us?

Sir Rob. Let him get it again if he can.—Sir James, I shall expect you at home. [*Exit.*

Mar. I hope no bad use will be made of it.

Sir J. The worst use has already been made of

it; but, at parting, Mr. Margin, let me give you a piece of advice. Take care how you provoke the public patience too far. You have set the laws at defiance, and long reigned uncontrolled, I confess; but don't wonder if the subjects of your slander forget there are laws in their turn, and, valuing an honest name more than their lives, should expose their lives to revenge it. [*Exit.*

O'Flam. Upon my soul, Mr. Margin, very wholesome advice, and will do you much good if you take it; but, above all, rid your hands of James Anonymous as soon as you can; you know it was he got you that beating.—That fellow has brought you into more scrapes than all your authors together.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Gentlemen, the milk-porridge is ready.

All. Let us start fair, I beseech you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to SIR ROBERT RISCOUNTER'S.

Enter LADY RISCOUNTER, LUCY, *and* KITTY.

Lady Ris. Sir James Biddulph is gone?

Kit. Yes, madam, and with him my master.

Lady Ris. Sir Robert! to what place, can you guess?

Kit. I should think, by what I overheard, to the printer's.

Lady Ris. To the printer's! of what use can that be?

Kit. I can't say; but your ladyship, I hope, will excuse me.

Lady Ris. Excuse you! why, child, what's the matter?

Kit. I have heard some whispering among the

clerks, as if things were not quite so well with my master.

Lady Ris. What, some little disappointments in trade?

Kit. Much worse, I am afraid; I don't know what it means, but they say an extent is brought into the house.

Lady Ris. With all my heart; let what will happen, it can be of little importance to me.

Lu. No, madam!

Lady Ris. No, child; you can't suppose, but, upon my marriage, I took care, at all events, to secure a proper provision.

Lu. Indeed! can that be done?

Lady Ris. A common caution, my dear; don't you see Mrs. Paduasoy rides in her coach, whilst half her husband's creditors are in gaol.

Lu. Is that the case?

Lady Ris. If wives were to have any thing to do with those kind of creatures, who d'ye think would marry with people in business? and, now I think on't, it will be so much the better; for the father's failure must, in some measure, fall on the daughter.

Lu. True; but your ladyship saw Sir James Biddulph.

Lady Ris. For a moment only, my dear.

Lu. Well, madam, and——

Lady Ris. I only just threw out a hint; to be more explicit now would make him suspicious; we must give him time to digest his disappointment.

Kit. As I live, Miss Lydia is coming.

Lady Ris. Lydia!

Enter LYDIA.

Lyd. I beg your ladyship's pardon for intruding without your permission; but my unfortunate situ-

ation will, I hope, plead my excuse. I come, madam, to beg your protection.

Lady Ris. Mine, child?

Lyd. Your assistance in detecting the authors of this horrid design.

Lady Ris. That, child, is properly your father's concern.

Lyd. True, madam; but the relation your ladyship bears to his family might, I hope, induce you to do me this justice.

Lady Ris. Justice, Lydia!—as it is my duty, I shall ever be ready to give my advice.

Lyd. That, madam, is all that I want.

Lady Ris. As this affair has made such a noise, there remains but one step to be taken.

Lyd. Which is——

Lady Ris. A marriage with James.

Lyd. With James! and so sanctify the scandalous story.

Lady Ris. It may be alleged by the family that the ceremony had passed before the detection.

Lyd. Detection! I hope your ladyship does not suppose there is the smallest foundation?

Lady Ris. That I shall not pretend to determine; but, at all events, you are in the right to deny it.

Lyd. Your ladyship's indifference shocks me more than the—— Your daughter, Lucy, will do me justice, I am sure, she has been privy to every——

Lu. Me, miss! I beg pardon for that: how should I know your intrigues? I beg you will not involve me in your guilt.

Lyd. Nay, then it is in vain to struggle; I see my ruin is resolved.

Enter SIR ROBERT.

Sir Rob. Where is Lady Riscounter? Well, my

dear, we have got to the bottom of this infernal business at last—here, here it is, in the rascal's own hand.

Lady Ris. Sir Robert!

Sir Rob. Why, the paragraph was sent to the printer's by James.

Lady Ris. Well?

Sir Rob. So that, you see, proves the forgery plain.

Lady Ris. Now, I think it makes the fact more apparent.

Sir Rob. How?

Lady Ris. By the confession of one of the parties.

Sir Rob. That, I confess, as it was voluntary—

Lady Ris. Makes it amount to a positive proof.

Sir Rob. It looks very suspicious indeed.

Enter SIR JAMES BIDDULPH.

Sir Rob. Here, my lady, Sir James, thinks, that, instead of clearing, this paper only serves to convince her.

Sir J. Is that your ladyship's judgement?

Lady Ris. Quite, to a demonstration, Sir James.

Sir J. But his policy?

Lady Ris. Obvious enough; to force the family to solicit his marrying the girl, as a favour.

Sir J. That, indeed!

Lady Ris. With the hopes, perhaps, of obtaining some additional advantage.

Sir Rob. In return, no doubt, for his great condescension. An infamous——

Sir J. I should have thought the young lady's private fortune and person, especially to one of his rank, a very sufficient inducement. But this Mr. James is an absolute Machiavel.

Sir Rob. As sly a dog as ever existed.

Sir J. But could not we see him, Sir Robert?

Sir Rob. The rascal is run off.

Sir J. Indeed!

Sir Rob. We have searched for him all the town over.

Sir J. That is unlucky; as I should have been glad to have asked him a question. I believe it is unnecessary to apologize to the family for any part I take in this business.

Sir Rob. We are all highly obliged.

Sir J. But I have received a letter, the contents of which astonish me much.

Sir Rob. About the matter in hand?

Sir J. Indeed, the writer is but a dependent of mine, but his veracity is out of the question; the facts must speak for themselves. Mrs. Kitty, you will be kind enough to stay here for a moment.

Kit. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir J. If the charge is false, I am sure, Lady Riscounter will pardon me for the sake of the motive. If true, she, in her turn, will stand in want of all our forgiveness.

Lady Ris. Me! who will dare to impeach my conduct, Sir James?

Sir J. Your ladyship's patience, a moment. This paper, Sir Robert, charges Lady Riscounter with being the sole contriver of this villanous project.

Sir Rob. How!

Lady Ris. Me!

Sir J. With a view of dissolving the contract between your fair daughter and me.

Sir Rob. To what purpose? what end?

Sir J. One that does me too much honour, I own, the bringing about a union between Miss Lucy and me.

Lady Ris. A most probable story, indeed: your informer's name, if you please.

Sir J. A servant who has oft attended me here.

Lady Ris. And he received it from——

Sir J. One of your ladyship's women; there she stands, I believe.

Lyd. Is it possible that you, Kitty—

Sir Rob. Patience, Lydia, a moment.

Lady Ris. And you think this paltry plot, obviously framed by a couple of servants, (unless you condescend to be the contriver yourself,) will justify you in bringing this charge against a person of my rank and condition.

Sir Rob. Fy, fy, Sir James, that is too presumptuous, indeed.

Sir J. Why, I should not have ventured, I believe, if I had not to produce a more unexceptionable witness than these.

Lady Ris. Name the person directly.

Sir J. Lady Riscounter herself.

Sir Rob. What?

Sir J. There is a little billet contained in this letter, where your ladyship promises a capital sum when some certain services are fully performed.

Sir Rob. By your leave, Sir James, let me look. Oh, clear, clear, it is her hand; there is no denying of this.

Sir J. I fancy Mrs. Kitty will own it. Otherwise, my servant is below to confront her.

Sir Rob. Well, what reply do you make to all this?

Kit. I beg pardon, Sir, of my mistress and you.

Sir Rob. Pardon!

Kit. I own the accusation is just; though I little thought Mr. Robin would betray me.

Sir Rob. Do you? And what an ungrateful wretch must you be! you have been but a poor instrument only. But is it possible you, Lady Riscoun-

ter, could so entirely forget what you owe to me and your——

Lady Ris. I see, Sir Robert, you are so far prepossessed that all I can say—

Sir Rob. Say, madam! what can be said for such—

Lady Ris. Nay, sir, I am not going to make a formal defence; it is not worth my while, nor would you have leisure to hear it: if you will walk down, you will find another sort of business that demands your attention.

Sir Rob. Madam!

Lady Ris. The house filled with a new kind of customers.

Lyd. Sir Rob. and Sir J. How!

Lady Ris. Only an extent, to seize on all his effects.

Lyd. Sir Rob. and Sir J. Is it possible?

Lady Ris. The world will, therefore, see how ill I am treated. But don't imagine, Sir Robert, that the provision I derive from her father shall be lavished to lessen your debts, or be employed in support of their author.

Lu. Your ladyship will have more prudence, no doubt.

Lady Ris. No, child, we will quit this mansion directly, and leave him for consolation to the care of his daughter.

Lyd. A more precious trust I could never receive. Your treachery to me, madam, I could both despise and forgive; but your insolent triumph at the distress of an unfortunate husband, gives you a pre-eminence above the worst of your sex. If, sir, what you are pleased to call mine can either reinstate or assist you, I beg it may be all employed in the service.

Sir Rob. Nay, prithee, Lydia—

Lyd. You see, Sir James Biddulph, there are new obstacles opposed to your purpose.

Sir J. If you mean those her ladyship has been pleased to produce, they only add an additional strength to my wishes. The piety with which this great, this first duty is discharged, must accompany every other relation in life. I applaud, and shall be happy to join in your purpose.

Lady Ris. Come, Lucy, let us leave these romantic creatures together, they are only fit for each other; when your effects are conveyed to proper trustees, I shall take care to put in my claim.

[*Exeunt* LADY RISCOUNTER *and* LUCY.

Sir Rob. Unfeeling, insolent woman! But thy goodness, Lydia, supplies every loss; nor will my creditors, when they find I never deceived them, take advantage of thy filial affection.

Enter a CLERK.

What now?

Clerk. The Dutch mail is arrived.

Sir Rob. Any private letters from Holland?

Clerk. Your correspondents, sir, have honoured your bills.

Sir Rob. And discharged them?

Clerk. Every one.

Sir Rob. And the report of their failing——

Clerk. Was without the smallest foundation.

Sir Rob. Heaven be praised. Now, Lydia, thy father can look again, with confidence, in the face of his friends.

Lyd. A more real transport could never have reached me.

Sir Rob. I know it, Lydia, I know it. This gentleman will both thank and reward you.

Clerk. Sir, I would beg just to——

Sir Rob. I guess what you mean; some inquisitive persons below; they shall be satisfied soon. I will attend them directly. [*Exit* CLERK.

Sir J. Give me leave to join in the general joy. But what, Sir Robert, shall we do with this paper? I fancy my man is in waiting:—Robin.

Enter ROBIN.

Rob. Sir.

Sir J. You have been of singular service to-day, which I shall take good care to acknowledge. The worth of this note, as the conditions have failed—

Rob. Like many more of its kindred, is reduced to waste paper—your honour; but as this happy turn has been chiefly owing to Kitty, I hope she will be restored to favour again.

Sir J. But consider, Robin, that was not her intention.

Rob. But recollect, sir, the temptation—

Sir Rob. But the treachery—

Rob. Five hundred pounds!

Sir Rob. That is true—as many, her superiors, though, perhaps, not her betters, are daily detected in doing things more criminal for less consideration, it is some excuse, I confess. But what says my Lydia?

Lyd. I shall be directed by you.

Sir Rob. And now, my children, nothing remains but the last act, to establish your union, and if (as I am resolved to disengage myself from that bad woman, and the other cares of this world) you will suffer me to be a partaker of your domestic felicity——

Sir J. and Lyd. You cannot in any thing oblige us so much.

Sir Rob. That is all I have to ask of you, or the world. [*Exeunt.*

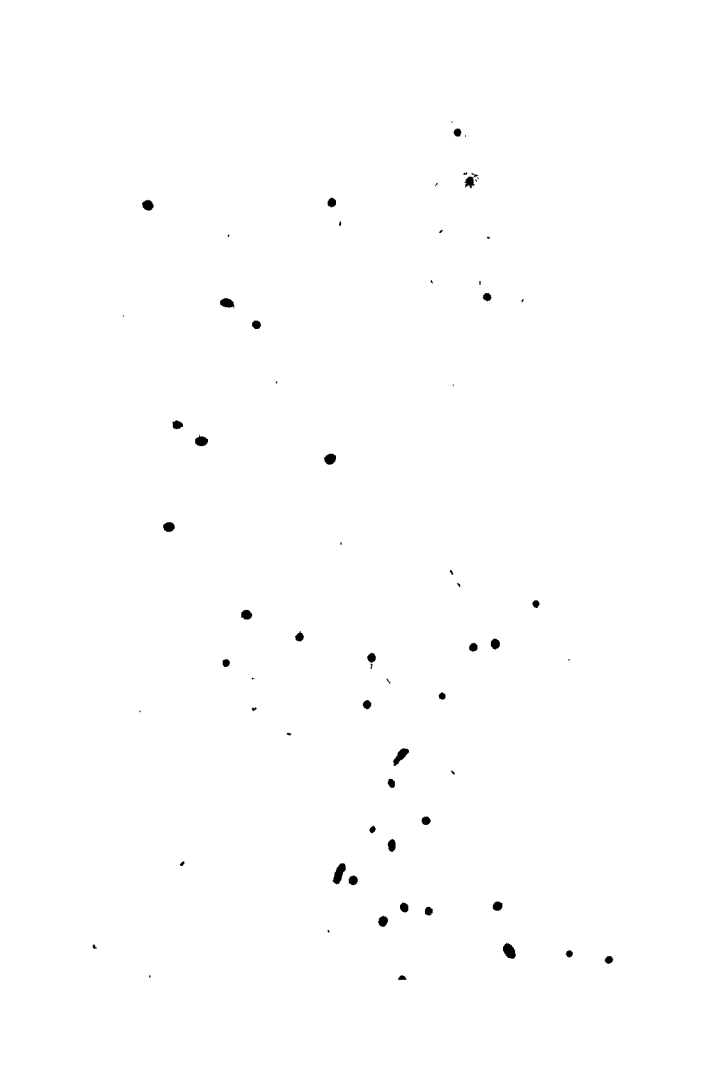
THE COZENERS;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS.

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.



REMARKS.

THE COZENERS was first performed in 1774.—Amidst the general corruption of the age, that of obtaining sinecures and places of emolument under the government was not the least. The sudden and unmerited elevation of persons without character, as well those who had not lived long enough in the world to acquire any, as those who might have forfeited a portion of their's, begat in men's minds gross notions of venality regarding those who had to bestow such favours: the same poison descended into the lower ranks of life; even justice was supposed to have held the scales at a marketable price, and a conspiracy to defraud its ends, or to immolate victims at its bases, had been recently discovered. Fleece'em's barefaced effrontery, and the flagrant sensuality incidentally alluded to in several scenes in this piece, are nowise understandable without this explanation; even the last symptom of the expiring Roman empire was confidently asserted to have re-appeared, and the prognosis of our downfall were too clear to admit of doubt. Although Junius had ceased to write and to worry, the Characteristics of Brown seemed to be fulfilling, and dismemberment did actually follow. One of the corruptors, Dr. William Dodd, at that time a most fashionable and much followed

preacher, had the temerity to tempt the Lord Chancellor with a bribe, that he might get inducted to a good living, then vacant; but the keeper of the king's conscience, very properly, took this proposal so ill, that the Doctor was struck off the list of king's chaplains, in consequence. This is the character Mrs. Simony would expose as her husband. His subsequent delinquency and unhappy exit have no place here, except to mark the progress of crime, and to show that the boundary of fair fame once passed by an ardent mind, like Dodd's, there is no rest, no stay for it, but in the congenial sloughs that surround it on every side. Most of the other cozeners exist at the present day; and, though the dark-chamber scene must be acknowledged a little *outré*, even for farce, our more recent play-wrights have excelled it hollow.

PROLOGUE.

Written by MR. GARRICK.

Spoken by MR. FOOTE.

In trifling works of fancy, wits agree
That nothing tickles like a simile:
And so, by way of tuning you to laughter,
With which, I hope, you'll tickle us hereafter,
From our poetic storehouse, we produce
A couple, spick and span, for present use.
Dramatic writers were, like watchmen, meant
To knock down vice—few answer the intent:
Both should be quick to see and seize their game;
But both are sometimes blind, and sometimes lame.
Can those cry *stand*, while they themselves are reeling?
Can these catch thieves, while they themselves are stealing?
When wanted most, the watch a nap will take—
Are all our comic authors quite awake?
Or, what is worse, by which they still come near 'em,
Are not you more than half asleep who hear 'em?
I, your old watchman, here have fixed my stand,
On many a vice and foly laid my hand:
'Twas you cried *Watch!* I limp'd at your command
Let me, like other watchmen, bless the times,
And take the privilege to nod betimes;
Nor let your frowns now force me, on a fright,
To cry——"*Past seven o'clock, and a cloudy night.*"
But, with your patience not to be too free,
We'll change the subject and the simile:—
To chase a smuggling crew, who law deride,
We launch a cutter of three guns, this tide:
With your assistance, we will make the foe
Sink, or submit to CAPTAIN TIMBERTOE.
Ye pirate critics, fall not foul on me!
If once I sink, I founder in the sea.
In this condition, can I swim to shore?
I'm cork'd, 'tis true; but then I want an oar.
You oft have saved my little bark from sinking:
I am no fish, save me from water-drinking!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. AIRCASTLE	*Mr. Foote.*
TOBY	*Mr. Weston.*
MR. O'FLANNAGAN	*Mr. Bannister.*
COLONEL GORGET	*Mr. Aickin.*
FLAW	*Mr. Wilson.*
TOM	*Mr. Fearon.*
MOSES MANASSES	*Mr. Burton.*
ROGER	*Mr. Griffith.*
HELLEBORE	*Mr. Baddeley.*
PRIG	*Mr. Parsons.*
SERVANT.	
MRS. FLEECE'EM	*Miss Sherry.*
MRS. SIMONY	*Mrs. Gardner.*
MRS. AIRCASTLE	*Miss Platt.*
BETSY BLOSSOM	*Mrs. Jewell.*
MARIANNE	*Mrs. Smith.*
MAID.	

SCENE—London; a Lodging-house and a Brothel chiefly.

THE

COZENERS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

Enter MRS. FLEECE'EM *and* FLAW.

Mrs. Fl. NOT a word more; you put me out of all patience.

Flaw. Well, but, Madam Fleece'em, listen, I beg, to a little reason.

Mrs. Fl. Reason! had you the least atom about you, you would rest content with our present agreement.

Flaw. But, surely, madam, a change of circumstances——

Mrs. Fl. Change! And pray, Master Flaw, how are mine changed for the better? Answer me a few short questions, and deny what I say, if you can. When I was compelled, by the cruel laws of this country, to go into exile, for taking, by mistake, a small parcel of lace out of a shop in the Strand, did not I choose Boston for my place of retirement?

Flaw. Granted.

Mrs. Fl. Did not I pass there, by means of letters from Mynheer Van Smuggle, of Rotterdam, for a person most honourably and nobly allied?

Flaw. For aught I know.

Mrs. Fl. Did not I receive a handsome present from that merchant for promoting the running of Dutch teas and rejecting those imported from England?

Flaw. Like enough.

Mrs. Fl. Did not my burning the first pound of souchong, and my speeches at Faneuil-hall and the Liberty-tree, against *the colonies* contributing to discharge a debt to which they owed their existence, procure me the love and esteem of the people?

Flaw. May be so.

Mrs. Fl. And what but your letters could induce me to return to a country where I had been treated so ill? But, sure, you must have forgot your proposals; here they are, and signed by yourself. Let me see!—[*Reads.*] "Articles of agreement between Philip Flaw, of Thiaves' Inn, in the city of London, on one part, and Felicia Fleece'em, late of Boston, but now of Pall-Mall."

Flaw. But what occasion——

Mrs. Fl. "*Imprimis.* That the said Felicia do take a handsome house at the west end of the town, with suitable servants; for the furnishing of which the said Flaw engages to procure her credit."

Flaw. And have not I?

Mrs. Fl. "Secondly, that the said Flaw shall circulate, privately and publicly, in taverns, coffee-houses, journals, chronicles, morning and evening posts, and courants, that the said Felicia is a person of great address and abilities; and that, by

means of many powerful connexions, she is able to procure posts, places, preferments of all conditions and sizes; to raise cash for the indigent, and procure good securities for such as are wealthy; suitable matches for people who want husbands and wives, and divorces for those who wish to get rid of them."

Flaw. And have not I performed every tittle? have not my expenses in attending plays, operas, masquerades, and pantheons, not to mention subscription-money to most of the clubs and coteries, amounted to a most enormous——

Mrs. Fl. I am near at an end.—[*Reads.*] "That the said Flaw shall at all times advise the said Felicia how far she may go without incurring the law; for all which he is to receive, out of the neat profits, thirty per cent."—You see, sir!

Flaw. I do.

Mrs. Fl. And don't you think *that* a very ample provision?

Flaw. But consider, madam, I have sacrificed my whole time to your business, and I don't believe the law has procured me——

Mrs. Fl. The law? What! a little private agency at the Old Bailey? a wonderful sacrifice! Fy, fy, Mr. Flaw!

Flaw. You are the last person, Mrs. Fleece'em, that should cast such a reflection as that: unless I mistake my attendance there was pretty useful to you.

Mrs. Fl. To me?

Flaw. Without my skill and address, your last voyage to America would have been changed to a much shorter trip.

Mrs. Fl. Sir!

Flaw. A tour to Tyburn, in a tim-whisky and two, would have concluded your travels.

Mrs. Fl. Why, you impertinent, infamous, petty-fogging puppy, it was through your ignorance that I was obliged to travel at all.

Flaw. Mine!

Mrs. Fl. Did not Alick Alibi, before your face, at Blackwall, in the transport, declare, that he never saw such a bungling business: that, if he had been employed——

Flaw. Alibi?

Mrs. Fl. You know him, I fancy.

Flaw. Perfectly. As, madam, you think him so wonderfully clever, you had better employ him; I am ready to resign in his favour.

Mrs. Fl. That is ungenerous in you, Mr. Flaw, to insult a gentleman under misfortunes. You know the clipping and filing affair compels him to keep a little private at present.

Flaw. Oh, then, that's the reason I am consulted! sweet madam, your servant! But, madam, I must desire you to find out some other agent: I declare off; you shan't make a stop-gap of me.

Mrs. Fl. Sir!

Flaw. Our accounts are easily settled: let me see! Seven pounds seven shillings from the brewer's clerk, who is gone with your recommendatory letters to India.

Mrs. Fl. Nine pounds, if you please.

Flaw. Seven. The rest paid out of my pocket to Kitt Copywell, for manufacturing the letters from the directors.

Mrs. Fl. Very well! Have you got the fellow aboard?

Flaw. Sailed the latter end of the week.

Mrs. Fl. Then, there is the crimp's money, for procuring the company an able recruit.

Flaw. Already deducted, for promising to get Bob Blueskin a reprieve at the——

Mrs. Fl. These, Mr. Flaw, are but trifling affairs; they may be settled at some other time.

Flaw. I am ready whenever you please: and so, Madam Fleece'em, I am your most humble, and very—— Oh! I had like to have forgot; if any thing should happen, that I may not be blamed, *in futuro*, I would advise you to take care of yourself: I overheard Luke Lockup, the turnkey, say, as you passed by in a coach, that he had some notion of having seen you before, and wanted much to know where you lodged.

Mrs. Fl. Luke Lockup! why, how is it possible he could——

Flaw. I know nothing of that; foreseeing, indeed, that such a thing might possibly happen, I had provided a couple of people to prove that you were shipwrecked on the western coast; so that, though you were returned before your time from your travels, it was none of your fault; but that is all over now; Mr. Alibi will, no doubt, take proper care.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, as to that, Mr. Flaw, there is no man living to whose care I would sooner trust myself than your own; but, sure, in this affair, we have been both of us rather too quick. Let us coolly consider: I am sure, I am the furthest in the world from——But, come; let us know what are your further demands?

Flaw. I scorn, madam, to take any advantage: as our risks and labour are equal, an equal partition; that's all.

Mrs. Fl. I consent to the agreement.

Flaw. Very well. I will prepare a draft to lay before council; which, when approved, you will sign.

Mrs. Fl. Without scruple; that being settled, let us come a little to business. What new game have you sprung?

Flaw. Plenty, plenty: the family I expected out of the country is come.

Mrs. Fl. Father, mother, and son! have you seen them?

Flaw. I received their note but this instant: they have made a little mistake, I believe, as to their lodgings.

Mrs. Fl. How so?

Flaw. I advised them, at their coming to town, to stay at one of the hotels for a week or ten days; instead of that, they are got to a bagnio.

Mrs. Fl. A bagnio?

Flaw. At the sign of the Lamb, in Long-Acre.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, for aught I know, that place will best answer our purpose.

Flaw. I must step directly to the Salopian Coffee-house; Ensign Gaters is to send you a hundred for obtaining him a step in his corps. Here; I have brought you the complimentary cards to put over the chimney. [*Gives her the Cards.*

Mrs. Fl. That's right. Let me see:—*the Duke of—best respects—Earl of—Viscount*—Ah, ah; very well! Have you prevailed on the coachman you mentioned?

Flaw. He has promised to parade before your house for an hour, after his master is set down at the Cock-pit. A couple of servants to wait at the door, as if the great man was above, will be right.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A note, sir, from a person below.

Flaw. Let us see it.—[*Reads.*] "Mr. O'Flannagan's compliments to Mr. Flaw, and as he, perhaps, may not choose to be at home to him, being at another body's house, begs to know where he may see him this evening."—A bagatelle; some trifling affair.

Mrs. Fl. You had, therefore, better despatch him at once. Show him up.

Flaw. He brought me a recommendatory letter this morning; but I was in a hurry, and desired him to meet me here about this time. Here he is.

Enter MR. O'FLANNAGAN.

O'Flan. Mr. Flaw, I am your most humble sarvant. Madam, I am yours unknown.

Flaw. Well, Mr. O'Flannagan, what are your commands with me?

O'Flan. Oh, Mr. Flaw, we will postpone that, if you plase: I hope I am a little better bred than to mention any thing of my private affairs before ladies; their little ears, sweet craturs, should be tickled with nothing but love.

Flaw. True, true; but here you may suspend your politeness a little; for, unless I am mistaken, it is to this lady's good offices you must be obliged [for success] in your present pursuit.

O'Flan. Oh that, indeed, alters the case. Why then, madam, this is my business at once. You must understand, I came over lately from Limerick; and there, upon my soul, all the world are gone mad about running beyond sea, in search after—I think it is *emigrations* they call them.

Mrs. Fl. I have heard, indeed, that there has been a prodigious desertion.

O'Flan. Prodigious! upon my soul, madam, in a hundred miles riding, I did not meet with a human cratur, except sheep and oxen, to tell me the road; and I should have lost myself again and again but for the mile-stones, that are so kind to answer your questions without giving you the trouble to ask them: and so, being desirous to follow my neighbours' example, I have, madam, made bold to come over before them.

Flaw. Right; one would not like to be last in the chase.

O'Flan. True. Now, madam, as some emigrations must be better than other some, I should be glad to be recommended to one of the best.

Flaw. Why, that will be no very difficult matter. Let me see! Is the collector of the window-lights in Falkland's Island disposed of?

Mrs. Fl. I have not heard that it has been given away; but, however, if it should, the surveyorship of the woods there is vacant, I am sure.

Flaw. Indeed?

O'Flan. And pray, madam, is that a lucrative place, as to the profit?

Mrs Fl. Besides the salary, for perquisites you are to have all the loppings and toppings.

Flaw. Ay! upon my word, if that can be got, you will be a happy man, Mr. O'Flannagan.

O'Flan. Without doubt, I shall be in very good luck. But pray, madam, what was the name of the Falklands.

Mrs. Fl. Falkland's Island.

O'Flan. Island! true, true. But, Mr. Flaw, is it a place one can go to by land? becaase why, I am not over fond of the sea; coming over t'other day from Donechedy, it tumbled, and jumbled, and rumbled me to such a degree.

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Flaw—

Flaw. I am afraid it will be difficult.

O'Flan. Why, then, if it is equally the same, I should be glad to have an emigration in some other parts.

Mrs. Fl. There was a thing that I got yesterday for a relation of mine that would have suited this gentleman.

O'Flan. Pray, what might that be?

Mrs. Fl. A tide-waiter's place in the inland part of America.

O'Flan. Inland! that would just do to a T.

Flaw. Why, you may easily provide in some other way for your cousin.

Mrs. Fl. That's true; but then, you know, he has put himself to some expense, in fitting himself out for the——

Flaw. Oh! I dare say Mr. O'Flannagan will be glad to reimburse him.

O'Flan. That I will; and give him a good spill for his resignation, into the bargain.

Mrs. Fl. Well, sir, if you will call here to-morrow, we will try to bring matters to bear; and—— [O'FLAN. *going.*

Flaw. This will be a damned fine thing, if you can get it.——Harkee! a word in your ear! if you discharge well your duty, you will be found in tar and feathers for nothing.

O'Flan. Tar and feathers! and what the devil will I do wid them, my dear?

Flaw. When properly mixed, they make a genteel kind of dress, which is sometimes worn in that climate.

O'Flan. Oh! what, I suppose, a kind of linen, like that at Belfast, that the natives malefactor themselves.

Flaw. True; and they will show you the best manner to wear it; it is very light, keeps out the rain, and sticks extremely close to the skin.

O'Flan. Indeed! That is very convanient. Why, as this place seems to suit me so well, before I get the nomination, by way of binding the bargain, had not I better give some earnest before-hand?

Flan. That will be making things sure.

O'Flam. Here is a fifty-pound note of Latouche's, payable at sight in a fortnight.

Mrs. Fl. Vastly well! I shall take proper care on't.

O'Flan. I don't doubt it at all. Feathers that keep out the rain! they must be ducks' to be sure, because they are used to the water: I can't help thinking, Mr. Flaw, when I have got on the dress, how like a goose I shall look. [*Exit.*

Flaw. Here is the note.

Mrs. Fl. This was lucky beyond expectation! If this goes on, in a little time we shall grow as rich as a keeper of one of the capital *clubs*.

[*A rap at the Door.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A gentleman below wishes to see Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. What sort of a person?

Serv. Vast finely dressed, please your——

Flaw. Oh! I know. Show him up!—The Israelite I was telling you of.

Mrs. Fl. What, Mr. Moses Manasses?

Flaw. The same.

Enter MOSES MANASSES.

Walk in, Mr. Manasses! this, sir, is the lady.

Mo. I vas never see a more finer vomans since

I vas born. Madam, I vas take de liberty to beg-a your protection upon a littel affairs.

Mrs. Fl. Sir, any friend of Mr. Flaw's——

Mo. I vas live in de sheety; but I have great ambition to reside at de court-end of de town.

Mrs. Fl. City! I could not have imagined that a gentleman of your dress and address would submit to live in the city.

Mo. Madam, you vas exceeding polite, indeed: I alvays finds de ladies very partial to me; I vas have de honour to be chose last veek maister of de ceremony to de Mile-end assembly; and Mrs. Alderman herself make alvays choice of me for de cotilions.

Mrs. Fl. I make not the least doubt of your great success with the ladies.

Mo. Oh, madam!

Flaw. Mr. Manasses, madam, is modest. The city! his success has not been confined to the city; many a heart-ach has he given, to men of consequence too, let me tell you, on this side the Bar.

Mo. Oh, fy, fy, maister Flaw!

Flaw. What! don't I know? did not you occasion the separation between Mrs. Modish of Marybone and her husband?

Mo. Oh, fy, fy, a flam, indeed, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Pooh! besides, was not you seen, during all the last summer, lounging, on horseback, through all the lone lanes about Chelsea and Fulham, with young Lady Harrow-heart?

Mo. All scandal, upon my honour.

Flaw. Zounds! why, have not I heard the young fellows at Betty's, when you have been passing by with Lady Kitty Carmine, in her new vis-a-vis, exclaim, "Look, look! there is Moses

again! dammee, I can't conceive what the ladies can see in that pencil-selling mongrel, Manasses! Gad, I fancy he catches women, as people do quails, with his pipe!"

Mo. Dat is all spite, all malice, on my honour!

Mrs. Fl. Pipe! what, does he sing?

Flaw. He! the voice of Squallache, with the taste and manner of Millico.

Mo. [*sings.*]

"Ven saw you my fader?
Ven saw you my moder?"

Mrs. Fl. I see, I see: nay, then, I don't wonder.

Flaw. Besides all this, master Moses is an absolute Proteus; in every elegance, at the top of the tree.

Mrs. Fl. Indeed?

Flaw. From his present dress, you would think that all his days were spent in a drawing-room.

Mrs. Fl. Without doubt.

Flaw. But were you to see him on the turf, at Newmarket, in his Tyburn-topp'd wig, tight boots, and round hat, you would swear he had never handled any thing but a currycomb since he was born. Why, he has rid matches.

Mrs. Fl. Really!

Flaw. Many.

Mo. No, madam; but vone, on my word; a match with Lord Billy Booty; I was first, hard in hand on a canter; my lord came side by side, give a little bit of chuck vid de elbow, and pop me plump into de ditch of de devil; and de people all halloo!

Mrs. Fl. Brutes! very unlucky indeed. But

pray, Mr. Manasses, how can I serve you? I should be happy to——

Mo. Why, madam, in von vord—I should be glad to be as well wid de gentlemen as Mr. Flaw say I be wid de ladies; and if, by your assistance, I could get into de Boodles, de Almacks, or von of de clubs——

Mrs. Fl. Bless me! is it possible that you are not a member?

Mo. I vas often put up; but dey always give me de black-ball.

Mrs. Fl. Bless me! what can be the meaning of that?

Mo. I don't know; perhaps, my religion vas de objection.

Mrs. Fl. I should hardly think them so squeamish as that: the dice are, indeed, often called doctors; but, by the large evacuations they cause, I should rather think them graduates of physic than of divinity: no, no; that can't be the case. Let me see!—perhaps, you have had dealings with some of the club.

Mo. Yes; I have de little annuity.

Mrs. Fl. Oh, ho!—so you have been admitted into the Jerusalem-chamber?

Mo. Yes, yes, very often.

Mrs. Fl. Oh, then the business is out; there then is the reason at once.

Mo. How?

Mrs. Fl. Some of the parties, I suppose, slow in their payments?

Flaw. And there is nothing those gentlemen dread so much as meeting a dun there.

Mrs. Fl. But, I dare say, Mr. Manasses, at such a place, would be above dropping a hint.

Mo. Oh, fy! madam, upon no account.

Mrs. Fl. Very well; why then, I may venture to assure them as much.

Mo. Sure, vidout doubt.

Flaw. But, however, madam, though some of the old dons should be crusty——

Mrs. Fl. To be sure, means might be used to get over that bar.

Flaw. Easy enough, I should think.

Mrs. Fl. Let us see! stuffing the negative side of the box, that the black balls cannot descend.

Flaw. Or, advancing or retarding the clock.

Mrs Fl. True; but then the waiters should be properly spoke to.

Flaw. Oh, I dare say Mr. Manasses does not mind upon such an occasion.

Mo. Oh, not at all; I am ready to part vid de money.

Flaw. I dare say. Why, do you consider that a seat there, as Mr. Manasses can manage——

Mrs. Fl. May turn out better for him, perhaps, than a borough.

Mo. Den I may rely upon you, madam?

Mrs. Fl. Give yourself no further trouble about it.

Mo. I have de honour, ma'am—— [*Going.*

Mrs. Fl. But should not Manasses make a deposit? [*Apart to* FLAW.

Flaw. To be sure.—Mr. Manasses! well, sir, I wish you joy, sir: what, we are to have a lottery, I find!

Mo. Dat is all fixed; dere is no danger of dat. I think, madam, dere is no finer sight can be, dan to see de lottery-lanterns hang up in de streets, vid large red letters, write on all sides; it is so noble!

Mrs. Fl. An elegant ornament, it must be con-

fessed, to a capital city: besides, if the passion for play cannot be suppressed, all that human wisdom can do, is to turn private vices to the use of the public.

Mo. True, true.

Flaw. I suppose you are an adventurer.

Mo. Ay, ay; I have my share, to be sure.

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'em was saying that she had some thoughts of trying her fortune.

Mo. By all means, I wish her much luck!

Flaw. If you should have any tickets about you——

Mo. Perhaps de lady may have de fancy to de particular number.

Flaw. No, no; we are not superstitious as to the number; it is the numbers we wish to get at.

Mo. Dere is, madam, a couple de sheets: vould you give de draft on de banker? dey are at present mush above par. Let me see!

Flaw. Oh, as to the price, we don't trouble our heads about that; we will settle that some other time; make a deduction, you know, for what madam bestows upon the waiters.

Mo. True, true! well, madam, your most humble: you may tell de club, dat I shall make de very good member; for now and den I love to play a little myself.

Mrs. Fl. You do?

Mo. Yes; to set de caster at hazard; and hold de Pharoh-bank wid de cards.

Flaw. Be cautious, or you may meet with your match.

Mo. Never fear! ven I vas play, I always do keep myself up for de purpose, like de fighting cock or de horse.

Mrs. Fl. Very right; for intemperance upon such an occasion——

Mo. It would be de devil, as I eats so little, and drinks nothing at all.

Flaw. No!

Mo. No, never at cards; de claret would turn all topsy-turvy: no, no, I must take care not to drown Pharoh again in de Red Sea.

[*Exit* MAN.

Flaw and Fl. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Fl. Oh! have you advertised an *honourable seat* to be sold?

Flaw. I never neglect business, you know; but the perpetuating this damned bribery act has thrown such a rub in our way—

Mrs. Fl. New acts, like new brooms, make a little bustle at first; but the dirt will return, never fear. What, have no offers been made?

Flaw. A short note from a broker, who hopped out of the Alley into a good estate in the north. By the first ships, I expect some good *subjects* from the siege of Tanjore.

Mrs. Fl. A sure importation of candidates; they come in good time; for, in such a country as this, what signifies cash without consequence?

Flaw. True; which in order to get, what they acquire by conquest they expend in corruption.

Mrs. Fl. Whilst, perhaps, a borough, pretty warmly contested, compels the unhappy hero to make a second trip to the east—(*Knocking*). Who can that be?

Flaw. Had I not better withdraw?

Mrs. Fl. First see who it is.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs. Simony, madam, below in a chair.

Flaw. Show her up, by all means.

Mrs. Fl. Simony!

Flaw. The doctor's lady, about the living, you know.

Mrs. Fl. I remember; but I thought the doctor himself a——

Flaw. A late mistake has made him a little cautious at present.

Mrs. Fl. A burnt child dreads the—But, pray, what kind of a woman is——

Flaw. An absolute gossip: your share in the scene will be short; let her run on, she neither expects nor desires a reply. Here she is.

Enter MRS. SIMONY.

Mrs. Sim. Madam, I am your obedient and very devoted: Mr. Flaw, I am entirely yours: ten thousand pardons for waiting upon you in this *dishabille!* but I stayed so late last night at Lady Lurch'em's assembly, that I have had but just time to huddle on my things; and now I have not five minutes to spare, as I promised precisely at twelve to call on Lady Frolic, to take a turn in Kensington gardens, to see both the exhibitions, the stained glass, dwarf, giant, and Cox's Museum. Mr. Flaw, I presume, has mentioned our little affair. The doctor would have waited on you himself, but men *hum* and *ha*, and are so round-about, awkward, and shy; now, I am always for coming plump to the point: besides, women best understand one another, you know. But, as I was saying, the patron of the business in question is, as we understand, a near friend and relation of yours.

Mrs. Fl. Madam, I shall be happy to——

Mrs. Sim. Your patience, madam, for I have not a moment to spare. Now, as it cannot be supposed that some people should do favours for

other people, with which people those people are not acquainted, I am ready to advance—for the doctor knows nothing about it.

Mrs. Fl. How, madam? I understood——

Mrs. Sim. The doctor? not he, I assure you, madam; entirely ignorant, in every respect. Now, if such a favour can be obtained, I am ready to deposit, as Mr. Flaw has, doubtless, informed you——

Mrs. Fl. Why, I can't say, madam, but it is very handsome.

Mrs. Sim. Nay, madam, the party will lose no credit by doing what is desired. The doctor's powers are pretty well known about town; not a more *populous* preacher within the sound of Bow-bells: I don't mean for the mobility only; *those* every canting fellow can catch; the best people of fashion ar'n't ashamed to follow my doctor; not one, madam, of the humdrum, drawling, long-winded tribe; he never crams congregations, gives them more than they can carry away; not more than ten or twelve minutes, at most.

Mrs. Fl. Indeed!

Mrs. Sim. Even the Dowager-Duchess of Drowsy was never known to nod at my doctor; and then he doesn't pore, with his eyes close to the book, like a clerk that reads the first lesson; not he! but all extemporary, madam, with a cambric handkerchief in one hand, and a diamond ring on the other: and then he waves this way and that way; and he curtsies, and he bows, and he bounces, that all the people are ready to—but then his wig, madam! I am sure you must admire his dear wig; not with the bushy, brown buckles, dangling and dropping like a Newfoundland spaniel, but short, rounded off at the ear, to show his

plump cherry cheeks, white as a curd, feather-topped, and the curls as close as a cauliflower.

Mrs. Fl. Why, really, madam——

Mrs. Sim. Then, my doctor is none of your schismatics, madam; believes in the whole thirty-nine! and so he would if there were nine times as many.

Mrs. Fl. Very obedient.

Mrs. Sim. Obedient! as humble and meek as a curate—does duly his duties; never scruples to bury, though it be but a tradesman—unless, indeed, he happens to be better engaged.

Mrs. Fl. Why, with all these good qualities, I should think, our success must be certain.

Mrs. Sim. With your assistance, madam, I have not the least doubt in the world: so, madam, begging your pardon for having intruded so long, I leave Mr. Flaw and you to confer on the subject. Not a step, I beseech you.—Lord bless me! I had like to have forgot; my memory, as the doctor says, is so very tenacious, that it is not one time in twenty I can remember the text. Besides all I have said, my doctor, madam, possesses a pretty little poetical vein. I have brought you here a little hymn in my pocket.

Mrs. Fl. Madam, you are very——

Mrs. Sim. Of which the doctor desires your opinion.

Mrs. Fl. Hymn! Then the doctor sings, I presume?

Mrs. Sim. Not a better pipe at the playhouse; he has been long notorious for that: then he is as cheerful, and has such a choice collection of songs! why, he is constantly asked to the great city-feasts; and does, I verily believe, more in-door christen-

ings than any three of the cloth. But this composition, madam, is of a different kind; it is but short; but if the party, your worthy friend and relation, should happen to like the manner of writing, he has a much longer one for his immediate perusal.—Madam, I am your obsequious and very devoted——Not a step, my good Mr. Flaw! my chairmen are, you know, in waiting. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. A hymn! what the deuce can the woman mean by a hymn? Let me see!—"Pro-"mise to pay to the bearer one hundred pounds, "for the governor and company."—Ay, marry, this is coming *plump to the business;* no man can deny, Mr. Flaw, but these lines are sterling. If the doctor's prose is as good as his poetry, I don't wonder he has so many admirers. But when shall I see you?

Flaw. Immediately after I have paid my provincials a visit.

Mrs. Fl. Oh, then I may have time to execute a little scheme of my own.

Flaw. Of what kind?

Mrs. Fl. One that will turn out both pleasant and profitable; you know the prim mercer, *not far* from St. Paul's.

Flaw. What, young Prig, that presents you an eternal attitude to all hacks of the city, and stands in stiff buckle before his own shop, like a sign?

Mrs. Fl. Even he.

Flaw. The fellow is a fop, to be sure; but you will not find it an easy matter to gull him; the coxcomb is suspicious and guarded.

Mrs. Fl. Against a common contrivance, perhaps; otherwise he would be no object for one of

my original genius. Besides, there is a necessity for some new silks to grace my niece's nuptials, you know.

Flaw. True, true: well, success attend you! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Be in no pain about me. Who's there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Order the carriage to the door; and do you and the coachman put on your best liveries.

Serv. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Fl. And, do you hear, John? if they should be inquisitive where I stop, as to my place of abode, give 'em no information; I should be sorry to have it known that one of my rank and fortune was pent up in a paltry lodging.

Serv. Your ladyship need be under no fears.

Mrs. Fl. If, at coming from the mercer's, where I shall go first, the master of the shop should get into the coach, drive to Dr. Hellebore's, who, you know, is famous for curing of mad folks, the third door to the left in Lincoln's-Inn-fields.

Serv. I shall give the coachman directions.

Mrs. Fl. And, John, if any body should call in my absence, let them know that I am gone with the Countess of Carnaby, to see the preparations for the great trial in Westminster-hall.*

Serv. Mighty well, madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. That fellow has uncommon talents, for one of his station: what a matchless porter would he make to a great minister! for he lies like an attorney, and his muscles are as steady as those of his master! [*Exit.*

* That of the Duchess of Kingston, for bigamy.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE—A Bagnio.

Enter FLAW, *followed by* TOM.

Flaw. Have not you a family here that came lately out of the country?

Tom. I suppose you mean, sir, Mr. Aircastle.

Flaw. I do; is the gentleman within?

Tom. In the back dining-room, up one pair of stairs.

Flaw. Will you let him know there is a person wishes to see him? If he wants to know my name——

Tom. I can tell him.

Flaw. Ay! why, have we been ever acquainted?

Tom. What! have you forgot Tom, Master Flaw, at the Crown and Rolls, in Chancery-Lane?

Flaw. I recollect. But I thought, by this time, you had set up for yourself: you seemed in a very good way.

Tom. Pretty well, master, for that part of the town: but, Lord, sir, the penurious pence of the lawyers wo'n't do for us, who are the superior knights of the napkin; after poring an hour over a six-and-eight-penny bill, "Here, Tom, give us change! and mind, there is a groat for yourself:" how was it possible to support a girl and a gelding upon such a two-penny tax? it could not be.

Flaw. That is true, indeed.

Tom. No, no. So, dipping pretty deeply in debt, I got a friendly commission of bankruptcy to discharge my old scores, and removed to this end of the town.

Flaw. Where you thrive, without doubt.

Tom. To give you a sample—It was but last night, Sir Ralph Riot moved, that every man in the club should give the waiter two guineas a-piece, just by way of *surprising* the rascal.

Flaw. And was it carried?

Tom. Oh, *nem. con.*—the members never flinch at a frolic.

Flaw. I wish you joy of your station!—But pray, by what accident came the family above to your house? There must have been some mistake in the matter; for they are people of very good reputation.

Tom. I can't guess: only that the town is thin, and business begins to grow dead, we should hardly have given them admittance; they are a strange unaccountable tribe: pray who the deuce are they?

Flaw. A respectable family, from the county of Wilts, with a very good landed estate, I assure you.

Tom. On which, I suppose, the 'squire condescends to kill his own meat, and madam, his lady, to dress it: then it is one eternal wrangle between them, conducted in a language pretty near as coarse as their carter's.

Flaw. They have been bred in a state of nature, Tom.

Tom. The husband, for once or twice, is entertaining enough: he sets out to inform you on a most material point, as he thinks, which he forsakes in an instant to follow some other circumstance, not material at all; this he soon quits for another, and soon for another, if you will give him attention. He puts me in mind of a pack of hounds in a hare-warren, [*a preserve,*] by eternally shifting the game, the pursuit never ends.

Flaw. You have him, Tom; Mr. Aircastle is, I own, very prolix and digressive.

Tom. Unless I am mistaken, the son has an old acquaintance here in the house.

Flaw. Ay!

Tom. Miss Betsy Blossom, one of our ladies, who comes, I fancy, from their part of the world: she wishes to avoid the father and mother, but hints that she has good reason to remember the son.

Flaw. Perhaps so.

Tom. Madam, the mother, too, who is still a jolly brisk dame, seems determined to make the most of her time.

Flaw. How so?

Tom. She has despatched, this morning, a billet to Colonel Gorget, an old master of mine.

Flaw. If they are at present alone, you will be so kind to announce me.

Tom. Those stairs lead to their door; there is no occasion for a master of the ceremonies.

[*Exit* FLAW.

Miss! Miss Betsy!

Enter BETSY.

Well, have you encountered your Corydon?

Betsy. No; I have carefully kept myself out of his way.

Tom. Then, now throw yourself into it as soon as you can; for, unless you prevent it, I can foresee a design to dispose of him in a very different manner.

Betsy. In the interim, I could wish to have him all to myself; no danger of an interruption from the father and mother.

Tom. Watch, then, when they are out of the

way. But remember, you run no risk in over-acting your part; treat him with a large dish of daggers, death, and despair.

Betsy. Never fear; I know how to proportion my dose.

Tom. Are you prepared with the two verses I gave you?

Betsy. Yes, yes; and I warrant will thunder them with good effect in his ears.

Tom. Success attend you, my girl! [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to another Room.

MR. *and* MRS. AIRCASTLE *discovered.*

Air. Well, well, mark the end on't! this will turn out like all the rest of your projects.

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Mr. Aircastle, will you never give over your grumblings? I thought I had convinced you, before you left home, that London was the only spot for people to thrive in.

Air. Convinced me! Did not I tell you what parson Prunello said—I remember Mrs. Lightfoot was by—she had been brought to-bed, that day was a month, of a very fine boy—a bad birth; for Dr. Seeton, who served his time with Luke Lancet, of Guy's—there was a talk about him and Nancy, the daughter—she afterwards married Will Whitlow, another apprentice, who had great expectations from an old uncle in the Grenadas; but he left all to a distant relation, Kit Cable, a midshipman aboard the Torbay—she was lost coming home, in the Channel—the captain was taken up by a coaster from Rye, loaded with cheese.

Mrs. Air. Mercy upon me, Mr. Aircastle, at what a rate you run on! What has all this to do with our coming to London?

Air. Why, I was going to tell you; but you will never have patience!

Mrs. Air. More than ever woman possessed. Would you, I say, be contented to spring, grow, and decay, in the same country spot, like a cabbage?

Air. Yes; provided I left behind me some promising sprouts.

Mrs. Air. What! have you no ambition? no soul? could you be easy to stand stock-still, whilst your neighbours are advancing all round you? Cottagers are become farmers; farmers are made justices; and folks that travelled barefoot to London, roll down again in their coaches and chariots; but still we stick!

Air. What then? For, as counsellor Crab said at the assizes—he came down to plead for Ned Nick'em, who won, at Bath, a large sum of Lord Luckless—the principal witness was Christopher Coggem—who was condemned to the pillory; but saved by Phil Fang, the attorney—who——

Mrs. Air. What matters what any body said? but you are always flying from the——

Air. Why, what a pox would the woman be at?—Ha'n't I lopp'd off a handsome limb of my land, to put your hopeful project in practice?

Mrs. Air. Well, and must not every body who ventures in the lottery of life first pay for his ticket?

Air. I believe Toby will hardly thank me for going into the wheel.

Mrs. Air. No; I suppose he would rather stay at home, and marry Bet Blossom; a pretty alliance he had like to have given us!

Air. But, you know, I drove the girl out of the parish.

Mrs. Air. Are there none of the same stamp left behind?

Air. Well, well, here we are, and what's to be done?

Mrs. Air. Our first business is to get Toby disposed of; upon your head, we will consult Mr. Flaw; as to my affairs, leave me to myself.

Air. And as for Toby, the best method, you think, will be——

Mrs. Air. To advertise the boy, to be sure.

Air. Do you think so? Advertise Toby! I was once told by Tom Type, a printer of one of the papers—he was tried for a libel before Sir Philip Floggem, at the Old Bailey—two of the jury died that sessions of the distemper—Doctor Drybones recommended vinegar by way of prevention—the doctor wore the strangest black wigs! they were made by Ben Blockem, of Bow-street—I dined with him once, when he was churchwarden, upon two bastard children—we had a haunch of venison—the venison was overroasted, and stunk—but Doctor Dewlap twisted down such gobs of fat——

Mrs. Air. But what is all this to the purpose?

Air. I was going to tell you, if you would but listen a bit!

Mrs. Air. What did Type say?

Air. That he never knew any good come of that kind of——

Mrs. Air. Then Type was a fool! Don't we see by the news that there is no other way of making matches in London?

Air. Well, well—you know best, to be sure.

Mrs. Air. Here the advertisement is; I have penned it myself.

Air. You penned it! Damn me, if she can spell a single syllable of the language!

Mrs. Air. Call the boy in; and observe, Mr. Aircastle, if he corresponds with the marks.

Air. Toby! [*Calling.*

Enter TOBY.

Lord! Mrs. Aircastle, how you have altered the boy! why his face is as long as a fiddle-stick! and then he has a bundle at his back as big as a child!

Mrs. Air. Pray, Mr. Aircastle, mind your own business, I beg. Would you have him dressed like yourself, in a suit of clothes made thirty years ago, when you were sheriff for the county?—Toby, stand forth! "Wanted, for a young gentleman of an ancient family, and agreeable person"—Toby, hold up your head.

To. I does, mother, I does.

Air. It is impossible, my dear, the boy should ever walk in that manner; why, he will run against every body he meets. Toby, do you think you can step without stumbling?

To. Not in the streets; but cross a room pretty well, I believe.

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, have you no idea of grace? Shoulders back, Toby; and chest a little more out!

Air. Now, child, look at his elbows! you have pinioned him down like a pickpocket.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Mr. Aircastle, grace.

Air. Grace! he has neither grace, nor grease; his breast-bone sticks out like a turkey's.

Mrs. Air. Nothing but grace! I wish you would read some late Posthumous Letters; you would then know the true value of grace: do you know

that the only way for a young man to thrive in the world is to get a large dish of hypocrisy, well garnished with grace, an agreeable person, and a clear patrimonial estate?—"A wife with a very large portion: if the fortune answers, proper allowance will be made for person and mind. The party and his rent-roll may be seen at the Lamb, in Long-Acre, every hour of the day."

Air. Why, this will bring the whole town to the house.

Mrs. Air. That is just what I intend; the more bidders the better.

Enter TOM *and* FLAW.

Tom. Mr. Flaw. [*Exit.*

Flaw. Good folks, you are welcome to London.

Air. Ay, here we are, Mr. Flaw, here's Toby, too.

To. Yes, here I am, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Bless me, what a change! I should scarcely have known him.

To. Yes, I suppose I am pretty much altered, being garnished with grace.

Air. Ay; a grace, I believe, that will tempt nobody to taste of the dish.

Mrs. Air. Never mind him, Mr. Flaw; he is a desponding creature, you know. But, as a proof that we have not been idle, here is the first fruits of my labour.

Flaw. What is it?

Mrs. Air. An advertisement to procure a partner for Toby.

Flaw. A partner!

Mrs. Air. Ay, a wife, with a suitable fortune.

Flaw. I hope it is not sent to the papers.

To. What! the notice where I am to be seen! here it is in my hand.

Mrs. Air. Give it me; and go you out, and wait till you're wanted: And don't listen, d'ye hear? And, Toby, be mindful of grace! and, d'ye hear? don't laugh! you may grin, indeed, to show your teeth and your manners.

To. Will that do?

Mrs. Air. Pretty well, for the first time.

[*Exit* TOBY.

Flaw. Bless me, madam! how could such a thought—

Mrs. Air. Don't we every day see such things in the news?

Flaw. Ay, from an old maid in despair, a broken milliner, or a tottering tobacconist.

Air. I told her so, Mr. Flaw: zounds, says I, you treat the boy as if he was a white bear, or an ostrich—though it is quite a mistake, Mr. Flaw, that those creatures eat iron: I saw one once at the Chequers, at Salisbury—the keeper's name was Evan Thomas, a Welshman—he had but one hand—he lost the other endeavouring to steal a piece of cheese out of a rat-trap—the trap went down, and—

Mrs. Air. Did ever mortal see such a man?

Air. And, zounds! why must not I speak? she likes to listen to no sounds but her own; but I will be heard, and—

Mrs. Air. And so you shall, when you talk to the purpose.

Air. Purpose, madam! Damn it, I would have you to know—

Flaw. Oh, fy, fy, good people! curb your choler a little: consider you are not now in the country.

Air. Well, well, I am calm.

Flaw. Then, to return to our business: besides,

my good madam, I had provided a match that would have completed all our matters at once.

Mrs. Air. How?

Flaw. A lady, an aquaintance of mine, lately arrived with her niece from the Indies—

Mrs. Air. And rich?

Flaw. Enough to purchase the sceptre of Poland.

Air. How!

Flaw. Ay, even before his very good neighbours had brought that monarchy down to a manor.

Air. And pray, as to the party?

Flaw. Fleece'em is the name of the aunt; not much indebted to fortune; but whoever is happy enough to marry the niece, wo'n't scruple, I dare say, to procure her a proper provision.

Mrs. Air. The most reasonable thing in the world.

Flaw. I ventured to promise as much.

Mrs. Air. Then you have hinted the business?

Flaw. As good as concluded. As marriage-bonds are illegal, it will be right to make a deposit before the solemnization.

Mrs. Air. To be sure. Now, Mr. Aircastle, I hope I was right; for, seeing a little cash might promote our designs, I got him to sell Sycamore-farm, and we have brought the money to town.

Flaw. How much might the——

Mrs. Air. Five thousand.

Flaw. But, with a few diamonds, for which I will get you credit——

Mrs. Air. By all means—when should we wait on the young lady?

Flaw. This very morning; we cannot be too quick: some of the young blades about town begin to have an inkling, I fear; I observe them throw their eyes up to the windows.

Mrs. Air. Without doubt. Mr. Aircastle, you will go out to the shops, and provide Toby with a new Beckford-hat and a couteau du chasse.

Flaw. And purchase, at the same time, some presents for the young lady.

Mrs. Air. The first time!

Flaw. Always the rule in the East; you never approach a superior without a suitable present.

Mrs. Air. No!

Air. No! why, fool, that is the way the Nabobs have got all their wealth—I knew one of them once, and, if he had not been so rich, really a good sort of a—he was inoculated for the small-pox, by one of the Suttons, at the great house by Hyde-park—the builder of it got into the Bench, and was afterwards cleared by an act of insolvency—though Tom Jenkins, one of his creditors——

Mrs. Air. You see!—Lord bless me now, Mr. Aircastle, how can you, when we have not a moment to lose—Go, go out with the boy, I beseech you. [*Going.*

Air. Well, well, well!

Flaw. I'll run before, and prepare Mrs. Fleece'em

Mrs. Air. By all manner of means.

Air. Pray, is not the toy-shop at the end of the street kept by the son of—I remember I met the father once at Newmarket—he was in a one-horse chaise, made by Varnish, here, in Long-acre—who built a state-coach for the Empress of Russia—he was recommended by Lord—I can't think of his name—who was chosen one of the sixteen for the kingdom of——

Mrs. Air. Take him with you, dear Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Come, sir, I will show you the shop.

[*Exeunt* AIRCASTLE *and* FLAW.

Mrs. Air. So! having provided for Toby, I am at leisure to attend to my own private concerns. Who's there?

Enter MAID-SERVANT.

Bid the waiter come up! [*Exit* MAID. If Colonel Gorget answers my letter in the way I expect, it will prove a pretty good beginning: the colonel, I make no doubt, knows the ways of the world, and will soon take the hint: he was vastly struck with me during the races; and I don't see why I have not as good a right to profit by my person as, I am told, some ladies do who live in this——

Enter WAITER.

Well, sir, what return to my letter?

Waiter. The colonel, madam, will obey your commands.

Mrs. Air. Very well! when he comes, show him into the next room. [*Exeunt.*

Another Room in the Bagnio.

Enter COLONEL GORGET, *reading a letter.*

Gor. Bravo, bravo, my sweet country acquaintance! this is a rendezvous, with a witness. Let me see!—um, um, um! "Unexpectedly brought by business to town—no time to make a proper provision — accommodate me with five hundred guineas:"—accommodate! an apt phrase, and a pretty sum too; but how the deuce could the woman suppose that I was able to advance such a sum?—um, um!—"Not prove ungrateful,—Elizabeth"—oh, ho! now I begin to conceive—stay! who have we here?—zooks! the husband himself,

Enter AIRCASTLE.

Air. What! Colonel Gorget!

Gor. Mr. Aircastle, I am happy to see you: but what important business can have brought you to London?

Air. Some family affairs, and to lay out a pretty large sum, which I lately got for a parcel of land —but is this visit intended to me?

Gor. No; I was quite a stranger to your being in town:—a lady in the house, that I lately knew in the country——

Air. What, from our part of the world?

Gor. No, no; but a devilish fine woman: last summer some little gallantries past between us *below.*

Air. Ay, ay; you officers play the very deuce when you come down into the country. I remember Ensign Sash, about ten years ago—his father came from Barbadoes—I met him at Treacle's, the great sugar-baker's, who had a house in St. Mary-Axe—he took the lease from Alderman Gingham, who served sheriff with deputy—there was tight work on the hustings—

Gor. Oh, the devil! he runs on at the old rate; —but we forget the lady.

Air. Oh, ay; "gallantry with her below"— which I suppose you have finished above.

Gor. No, faith, not entirely, my friend; but I think we are in a fair way.

Air. Ay!

Gor. The garrison has offered to surrender.

Air. Then what prevented you from taking possession?

Gor. The governor, as usual, insists on a bribe, which it was not immediately in my power to pay——

Air. Damn those governors!—why, there was the governor of Bergen-op-Zoom, in the last war——

Gor. But, hear me;—I was just stepping home to provide the credentials; but, however, this lucky meeting will, I flatter myself, put an end to my journey.

Air. As how?

Gor. If you will supply me with the sum till evening, I shall close the bargain without quitting the house.

Air. How much?

Gor. Five hundred guineas.

Air. Five hundred guineas! what a cormorant the woman must be!

Gor. Not at all, when her husband is rich, and she is above accepting a trifle.

Air. Now, I should have thought that would have made her more reasonable.

Gor. Quite the reverse; why, did you ever know a wealthy courtier accept of a moderate pension?

Air. That, indeed.— But are you really serious?

Gor. So serious, that if you will lend me the money——

Air. Nay, but, colonel, that is——

Gor. Nay, but if you hesitate——

Air. No, it is not that; the money is quite at your service; but you will repent, and then reproach me—what! five hundred! there can be no woman worth it.

Gor. You would alter your tone if you saw her.

Air. Should I? prithee tell me her name, perhaps, I may know her.

Gor. I durst not; you know my honour is concerned.

Air. Honour with such a woman as that!

Gor. She is very well known.

Air. And ought to be better.

Gor. But I waste time, and may lose the critical minute:—will you supply me? or must I——

Air. With the greatest pleasure in life; here is, in this bag, the very sum, which I have just received for a draft in the city.

Gor. Ten thousand thanks, my dear Mr.——

Air. I can't say, though, but I am sorry——

Gor. Oh, it is not impossible but I may come off at an easier rate; with such a capital in hand, one may haggle, you know.

Air. True, true; I'd endeavour to get her for nothing: chouse her, chouse her! do, colonel. If, indeed, she had asked for a ring with a poesy, or any such trifle as that—but such a monstrous demand! I would give something to see her.

Gor. Why, it is my opinion you know who she is.

Air. Really?

Gor. Now, if it should turn out that you had been happy with the lady yourself, would not that greatly surprise you?

Air. Me! ha, ha, ha! the deuce a bit: though, when I came first to the Temple, there was a lawyer's wife that lived in Quality-court, that I was exceedingly fond of—her husband came home one night, and I crept under the bed, where I should have remained concealed, but for a little dog of Charles's breed: he went bow, wow, wow!——

Gor. Oh, the devil!—but, consider, time presses; I must away to the lady.

Air. True, true; and I to the shops with my boy. And I happy with the—ha, ha, ha!—however, if that be the case, colonel, it is a stronger reason for closing your purse-strings; for, the devil take me if I ever knew a woman who was deserving a tithe of that sum in my life!—Yes; I lie! I did; a Greek girl, they call Circassian—I saw her at Tunbridge—where, by the by, they have the oddest pantile walk, with the music on a shelf—and as the company walk to and fro, the fiddlers go tal, lal, la——

Gor. Nay, but—[*pushing him out*]. This is lucky beyond expectation; what a civilized husband, to supply me with the very money I wanted!

Enter TOM.

Is the lady at leisure?

Tom. She knows her husband is gone out, and will be with you this instant.

Gor. Very well; take care, and watch his return.

Tom. Here she is. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. AIRCASTLE.

Mrs. Air. What! you are come, my dear colonel! I have waited for you with the utmost impatience.

Gor. And I, madam, have flown to obey your commands.

Mrs. Air. No more of that, colonel, I beg: I blush to consider——

Gor. Blush! and why so, madam?

Mrs. Air. At what you must think of my letter: but the high sense I entertain of your friendship, induced me, in such an exigence, to make the trial.

Gor. And the wisest step you could take.

Mrs. Air. Pardon me, sir; I am not to learn how dangerous it is to have an obligation to you.

Gor. And why so? Can there be any thing more natural than to desire the assistance of the person who loves us?—of my attachment, I hope, you have no reason to doubt?

Mrs. Air. That, sir, is the very source of my sorrow, and has determined me to support every evil; nay, to apply even to Mr. Aircastle himself, rather than——

Gor. How, madam! then it is plain I have lost your esteem. Fool that I was, to be lulled by the bewitching lines of your letter! I thought that I had detected Love, that sly lurcher, lurking under the mask of confidential; but now I, unfortunately, find how far I am from your favour.

Mrs. Air. Cruel, unjust Colonel Gorget!

Gor. Ha! am I unjust? you revive me! you restore me to—but banish every thought of an obligation to any one but me; I should be jealous of——

Mrs. Air. But really, colonel, the sum is——

Gor. Of no importance at all; a mere trifle; just nothing: I shall not feel it, believe me.

Mrs. Air. How can I be too grateful for such a generous proof of your friendship? Sure you were born to——

Enter TOBY.

What the deuce has brought that booby back? [*Aside.*

To. Father desires you would call in your way, and take him up at the sword-cutler's.

Gor. How! the young cub! This is lucky beyond expectation!—Here, madam, are the five

hundred guineas, which you will be kind enough to pay, with my thanks, to Mr. Aircastle, your husband.

Mrs. Air. Finely taken and turned; what infinite wit and contrivance! [*aside.*]—But would it not be right, colonel, just to sign a receipt?

Gor. Unnecessary, madam; but just as you please.

Mrs. Air. There is pen and ink in the room over head.

Gor. Give me leave to conduct you.

[*Exeunt* GORGET *and* MRS. AIR.

To. I don't understand what father and mother's about. Here am I dizened, and skewered, and graced, just like a young colt that is a-breaking; nay, they were going to advertise me, too, as if I was really a horse; but lawyer Flaw has made them alter their minds, and I am to be disposed of by private contract, I think. I can't say that I am over-fond of their ways. Oh, poor Betsy Blossom! let them match me to whoever they will, I shall never love any like thee: I believe I should have put an end to their project, if I could but have found—hey! who is this? mercy on me? sure, it must be her ghost! and yet that can't be; because ghosts, they say, never comes but at night. Betsy?

Enter BETSY BLOSSOM.

Bet. Master Toby?

To. But, is it possible? can it be you?

Bet. As you see.

To. Well, and how? Lord, I have ten thousand questions to ask you? Where hast been? how dost do? how comest here? Why, you are vast fine, Betsy, all of a sudden; you be not married?

Bet. Married! no, no; you have put that out of my power, you know.

To. Me! how so, Mrs. Betty?

Bet. Is that a question now to be asked? Have you so soon forgot what has happened between us?

To. No, no; I remember some part pretty well, I believe: but you cannot come for to go for to say that we ever went to church together, in that there way you mean.

Bet. That ceremony, Mr. Toby, you know well, was all that was wanting——

To. Besides, it could not be, Mrs. Betsy; because why, as father says, since the parliament-house interfered, it is against the law to marry for love.

Bet. How! what, are all your vows, oaths, promises, forgot? does not this sixpence, broken between us! when we last met in the grove, stare you full in the face?

To. Yes; I have t'other half in my pocket.

Bet. Does not your conscience, Mr. Toby, upbraid you? But men are all traitors alike! their whole study is to delude poor innocent maids. Oh! why did I trust that fair face and flattering tongue, and not suspect the wily serpent that was lurking beneath!

To. Nay, Betsy——

Bet. But my prayers are granted, however; my only wish was to see you once more——

To. My sweet, dear, little Betsy——

Bet. Once more to survey that sweet form; the business of life is now over! Eyes, take your last look! open, thou cold earth, to receive me——

To. Lord have mercy! if you don't frighten me out of my wits.

Bet. To thy dreary mansion I come! there my sorrows will cease, and my shame and name be forgot by the unpitying—oh! [*Faints.*

To. Stop, stop, dearest Betsy, and take me along with you! murder, fire, water! waiter! what, will nobody come to assist her?

Enter Tom.

Tom. Bless me, sir, what can be the matter?

To. Why, here is a poor young creature at her last gasp: clap her hand, and bend her forward a bit!

Tom. Miss Betsy! Mercy on us! how came this about? it is only a fit; she revives, her eyes begin to open a little.

Bet. Where am I?

To. In the fore-room, up one pair of stairs.

Tom. Bless me, sir, what can be the occasion of this?

To. Why, it is a young woman that is breaking her heart.

Tom. Her heart! and for what?

To. Why, for love of me, to be sure.

Tom. And can you be such a barbarian? why, you must have the heart of a tiger, to stand unshocked at such a horrible scene.

To. Nay, I have been shocked enough, if that is all.

Tom. Then, why don't you remove her distress?

To. Why, she wants me to marry her.

Tom. And is that all she asks? and can you hesitate for such a trifle as that?

To. Why, how can I, when father and mother have promised me to an Indian woman, as rich as a Jew, from beyond sea?

Bet. How! and have I a rival? perjured mon-

ster! But think not my death shall finally close our account; my shade, like Margaret's grimly ghost, shall pursue thee, haunt thee in dreams at midnight, shake thy curtains round thy guilty head, and holloa in thine ear!

Bethink thee, Toby, of thy fault,
Thy pledge and broken oath;
And give me back my maiden vow,
And give me back my troth.

To. Take it with you, Mrs. Betty, whenever you please.

Bet. [*Sings.*]

For this I'll haunt thy midnight dreams,
And hover round thy bed;
Thy ears I'll fill with horrid screams,
Nor leave thee till thou'rt dead.

To. Why, you won't go to be so cruel, I hope; what is there no amends to be made?

Tom. So, sir, you see, dead or alive, she is determined to plague you.

To. Yes, yes, I see it well enough. Lord, who could have thought it? she is mightily changed since her coming to London.

Tom. This town is apt to open the mind.

To. Is it? I hope it will shut again, though, when she gets into the country. But pray Mr. What-d'ye-call-em, by what chance did Betsy come here?

Tom. My mistress took her in out of compassion: it is wonderful how charitable a lady she is! why, we have five or six more young women here in the same situation.

To. Indeed! she must be the most goodest woman on earth: well, if she don't go to heaven, what chance has such a poor creature as I?

Tom. None at all, unless you repair the wrongs she has suffered.

To. But, if I was minded to comply with her wish, I don't see how I can bring it about?

Tom. You are one-and-twenty, no doubt?

To. These three years and above.

Tom. And miss?

To. Within a twelvemonth of me.

Tom. Oh, then I will manage matters, I warrant. Where are you going?

To. To call on father, at a shop near the old black man a-horseback; the wind has blown his hat from his head.

Tom. Very well! give him the slip as soon as you can; run back here; you will find us——

Betsy. What! is he a-going? oh!

To. Nay, Betsy, be quiet! ben't I ready to do all you want? If you faint any more, I wish I may die if I'll have you.

Betsy. Wo'n't you?

To. No.

Tom. Courage, miss! keep up your——

To. Right, Mr. ——, or, if she must faint, can't she wait a little, till I get out of the house? [*Exit.*

Tom. He is off: finely managed! Do not stir from hence: I will run to the Commons, and be back again in a——One kiss, as a reward for the part I have——

Enter TOBY.

To. I forgot to ask, sir, where I should——

Tom. Run! here, sir! she is fainting again.

To. Is she? then call somebody else, for I will make the best of my way—— [*Exit.*

Tom and Bet. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Enter MRS. FLEECE'EM *and* PRIG.

Mrs. Fl. It is lucky the doctor is at home, *(aside.)* John, you may take the silks of Mr. Prig, and put them into the coach. How could I be so giddy to forget my purse, and leave it on the table? All my servants are honest, I hope.

Prig. No doubt; it would be the greatestest of crimes to injure a lady of your affability and amiability.

Mrs Fl. Quite polite, I protest, Mr. Prig! I am sorry, however, sir, to have given you all this trouble.

Prig. I consider it, madam, as one of the most greatestest pieces of happiness that could have befallen Paul Prig. Your la'ship is a perfect pattern of humility; to suffer a simple tradesman like me to occupy part of your la'ship's coach, is such an honour, that——

Mrs Fl. Honour! by no means, Mr. Prig: I don't know a station more useful, or, indeed, more reputable, than that of a citizen like you, who condescends to employ his genius in adorning his fellow-creatures. The ladies, indeed, are most obliged to your labours.

Prig. Were all ladies like you, madam, my condition would be celestial, indeed: for, as Master Shakspur says,

"The labour we delight in physics pain."

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Prig, I protest, you surprize me! who could have expected so much gallantry from the Ward of Farringdon-Within?

Prig. Your charms, madam, would animate even a native of Hockley-in-the-Hole.

Mrs. Fl. Fy, Mr.——

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. My master begs you would step into his study. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Prig, you will excuse me a moment:—it is lucky my lawyer is at home; I shall take the money, and not give you the trouble to go so far as my house. I shall soon call again at your shop. [*Exit.*

Prig. The greatest pleasure, madam, that I could ever have.—Ha, ha! left her purse on the table—a likely story, indeed! No, no; I understand her ogles and leers; her eyes spoke more truth than her tongue. I don't recollect to have seen her before; but she has seen me, that is clear, from the strength of her passion. "Soon call at your shop;" and how soft the tone of her voice! Yes, yes; I believe you will. Well, well, you sha'n't be disappointed, my dear; his worst enemies can't accuse Paul Prig of being cruel.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. You had better step into this room, there is a fire.

Prig. By all means. "A station more useful or more reputable than that of a"—poor creter! she must be very far gone, indeed. [*Exeunt.*

Another Room.

DR. HELLEBORE *and* MRS. FLEECE'EM *discovered.*

Helle. To whose recommendation, madam, do I owe the honour——

Mrs. Fl. The world's, doctor; your great reputation.

Helle. Oh, madam!

Mrs. Fl. But, as I was observing to you, sir, if it was not for these unaccountable whims in my uncle, no man in England has a finer understanding, or a clearer conception; nothing irregular in his conduct; discharges all the social duties with the utmost exactness; reasons with the most perfect precision upon every subject.

Helle. And the state of his bodily health?

Mrs. Fl. He does not complain.

Helle. And these distractions are frequent?

Mrs. Fl. I think more so of late.

Helle. Ay, the great tension of the *pia-mater* must enfeeble the system; and the paroxysms, of course, oftener repeated and of longer continuance. And his whims, you say——

Mrs. Fl. To the last degree extravagant: last week he supposed himself a young nestling crow, and constantly opened his mouth like a bill, and cawed for food when he found himself hungry.

Helle. A manifest mark of distraction!

Mrs. Fl. His whim of to-day is peculiar enough.

Helle. Of what kind?

Mrs. Fl. He supposes himself a mercer upon Ludgate-hill.

Helle. A mercer!

Mrs. Fl. And that he has sold me a parcel of silks, for the payment of which I have conducted him hither.

Helle. Why, madam, we do now and then meet with extraordinary instances: but could not I see your uncle?

Mrs. Fl. I brought him hither on purpose.

Helle. [*calling*]. Desire the gentleman below to walk up. Why, madam, the goodness of his health we look upon as a bad symptom in these kind of cases; when they arise from a fever, why——

Mrs. Fl. I hope there will be no occasion for violent remedies, such as correction, or strait waistcoats.

Helle. Not if he is tractable.

Mrs. Fl. But, if that should not be the case, sir?

Helle. The best way, ma'am, is to leave him to my care a little: I have a convenient house, not far from town, where mad people are managed with greater advantage.

Mrs. Fl. I shall submit his treatment entirely to you. But, I suppose, sir, it will be right for me to withdraw, as you may have some questions to ask him improper for the ear of a lady. I will pay a short visit, now I am in this part of the town.

Helle. As you please, madam.—A discreet person! this does not seem to be a family complaint. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Fl. Here he is. I must humour him a little.

Enter PRIG.

This gentleman, sir, will settle our little affair. Depend upon it, I shall be with you soon. [*Exit.*

Prig. I shall wait for that honour with the greatest impatience. She is a fine creter!

Helle. Come, sir, take a chair.

Prig. Sir, there is no occasion.

Helle. You had better, as I shall have a good many questions to ask you. [*They sit.*] Well, sir, and how do you find yourself?

Prig. Sir, you are very obliging; I am, I thank you, in very good health.

Helle. Don't you feel yourself at times inclined to be feverish?

Prig. Feverish! not I, sir.

Helle. And have you had no material complaint for any time back?

Prig. Not that I recollect; a slight touch of the *influenza*, indeed; but fared full as well as my neighbours.

Helle. And your appetite?

Prig. As usual; but I am at no time an over-great eater.

Helle. So much the better. Favour me with your hand, if you please.

Prig. Sir! [*Rises, and offers his hand.*

Helle. Keep your seat, if you please.—[*Feels his pulse.*] Rather a little too lively! And as to your sleep, now, is it continued or broken?

Prig. Sir?

Helle. Are your slumbers without interruption? have you no starts?

Prig. Not that I know of; indeed, I never was over-fond of my bed.

Helle. Ay, restless; I thought so.

Prig. Indeed, my business requires that I should be an early riser; when an apprentice, I was always the first in the shop.

Helle. An apprentice! poor man! but, however, I see no violent symptoms at present; a preparatory medicine, till we can put him into a regimen. Be seated; I will fetch you a draught that will immediately settle the business. [*Exit.*

Prig. A draft!—A draft on his banker, I reckon: why could not he have given it me at first? An odd man! what the deuce has my health to do with my bill! Let us see; what is the *tote*? A hundred and ninety-two pounds, six, and—oh! here he is, I suppose, with the check.

Enter HELLEBORE, *with a bottle and phial.*

Helle. You will take this draught, three times a day, at two hours distance, first shaking it well.

Prig. Sir?

Helle. And nine drops of this, in a glass of water, first going to bed; it will serve to compose——

Prig. Compose! here must be some mistake in this matter! I fancy, sir, you take me for somebody else—my name, sir, is Prig; I keep the great mercer's shop, as you go up Ludgate——

Helle. Hum! very well, sir.

Prig. And am come with the lady below to be paid this here bill in my hand.

Helle. Oh, sir, I am no stranger to the whole of that story: but how could you now—for, as you are cool at present, I will reason the matter a little—how could a man of your rank and fortune indulge such an improbable whim?—I say, a mercer, indeed!

Prig. And pray, good sir, who d'ye take me to be?

Helle. Oh, sir, I know very well; your niece has fully informed me.

Prig. My niece! I have no niece; at least, not in London, I am sure.

Helle. No! what d'ye think of the lady who conducted you hither?

Prig. She my niece! Damn me, sir, till this morning, if ever I set eyes on her! Sure——

Helle. Oh, ho! what, you are beginning to be violent: you had better be quiet, or I shall find a method to tame you.

Prig. Tame me, sir? I don't understand what you would be at! Will you pay me my bill here, or not?

Helle. Your bill? poor creature!

Prig. *Poor créter,* sir? none of your *poor creters* to me! follow your client's directions, and discharge me at once.

Helle. My client!

Prig. Ay, sir. When money is in the case, a man may as well have to do with Old Nick as a lawyer; there is no getting it out of their hands.

Helle. Oh, he takes me for a lawyer. The paroxysm is exceedingly strong. Who is there? Order a coach, and let the three keepers convey him to Chelsea.

Enter THREE KEEPERS.

Prig. Me to Chelsea? let any body touch me that dare!

Helle. Ay, ay, we will see that.

Prig. This is some conspiracy, I suppose, to bam, to chouse me out of my money.

Helle. You will take him to Chelsea.

Prig. Hands off!

Helle. And, as you see he is violent, let him have the back room, with the barred windows, up two pair of stairs.

Prig. Me to Chelsea! me barred windows, and back room two-pair of stairs!

Helle. If the fit should increase, put on the strait-waistcoat. I shall call myself *in* the evening.

Prig. Let me go, gentlemen! This is a damned contrivance to rob me! Unhand me, or you shall be all swinged and soused! imprison a citizen, that only comes for his money! Damn me, Jack Wilkes's affair was but a flea-bite compared to this! [KEEPERS *hurry him off.*

Helle. If this is the case, on with the waistcoat.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter FLEECE'EM *and* FLAW.

Flaw. Ha, ha, ha! poor Prig! in what a piteous plight have you left him!—But the Air-castles will all be here immediately, so take care we are not interrupted.

Mrs. Fl. As they are so exceedingly credulous, the business will soon be despatched.

Flaw. In a trice. I have stipulated that your provision shall be secured before the solemnization.

Mrs. Fl. Right, right; perfectly right.

Flaw. But have you properly prepared the girl for the purpose?

Mrs. Fl. Her part will be easy.

Flaw. True; but she should be adroit; as events may arise that will require some little skill: who the deuce have you got?

Mrs. Fl. Why, I considered that as a very ticklish point; it would be dangerous to trust, and difficult to find in this town a suitable subject; don't you think that the black girl I brought with me from Boston——

Flaw. The negro? zounds, her complexion will betray her at once!

Mrs. Fl. I have thought of an expedient to secure us from that.

Flaw. It is true, these people have no great penetration; but what we do——

Mrs. Fl. Must quickly be done: I will just speak to the girl. [*Calls.*] Marianne!

Enter MARIANNE.

Mar. What you want, Missy?

Mrs. Fl. Go in and throw yourself on the bed; and, do you hear? let the window be shut, and the curtains drawn exceedingly close.

Mar. Yes, Missy.

Mrs. Fl. And whoever speaks to you, don't you chatter and talk, but sigh now and then, as if you were sick: you will be only asked a question or two; as, *if you are ill?* or *are better?* to which you need say nothing but *yes.*

Mar. Nothing but *ies.* I take care, Missy, never you fear.

Mrs. Fl. And, Marianne, no candle!

Mar. No, no, Missy. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Oh, she will answer our purpose, I warrant: besides, unless they are very pressing, to see her, there will be no occasion to produce her at all.

Flaw. But, I beg your pardon, there will: by my directions, the son is provided with presents, with a view to propitiate his Venus.

Mrs. Fl. [*Rap at the door.*] There they are! Mr. Flaw, you will receive them. It will be right for me to retire, to see if all things within are in order. [*Exit.*

Enter AIRCASTLE, MRS. AIRCASTLE, *and* TOBY.

Air. I tell you the boy is an absolute sight, and I should not wonder if the young lady was to——

Mrs. Air. You wonder? and pray who made you a judge of the proper——

Flaw. Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake, hush! consider where you are!

Air. She is at her old tricks, Mr. Flaw; there is no——

Flaw. A key lower, good sir, if you please! You will frighten the family.

Air. By her good will I should never open my mouth but to eat.

Mrs. Air. I know but little else that it's good for.

Flaw. Nay, madam, now you are as faulty as he. Only think what a strange impression this will make on the ladies within! I beg you will suspend your warfare awhile.

Mrs. Air. Well, well!

Flaw. And no contradiction, I beg; but be attentive and polite to each other, as people of fashion should be: you may renew hostilities, and make up for lost time, as soon as you are out of the house.

Mrs. Air. Why, how is it my fault, Mr. Flaw?

Air. Nor shall it be mine: for man and wife to quarrel before folks is rather rudish, I own; by ourselves, indeed, it is a pretty innocent amusement enough—Tom Testy, of our own town, used to say—his wife was a Devonshire girl; if I am not mistaken, from Plymouth — where, by the by, they have the best john-dories in England—Old Quin, one summer, went thither on purpose——

Flaw. And if, Mr. Aircastle, you would contract your conversation a little.—*To be sure, your manner is pleasing, and your matter full of instruction; but, as we meet upon business*——

Air. I believe you are right, Mr. Flaw. Come, my love; let us show him how polite we can be, if we please.—Dear Mrs. Aircastle, how I admire your taste! these here skirts of the boy's are so light and genteel, and so airy——

Mrs. Air. True; I am happy, my dear, that I have your approbation: those we got made in the country, trapes and dangle like a parcel of petticoats.

Air. Right, my love.—For all the world, like a Hounslow post-boy! His whole figure is just like a spider, nothing but legs; a mere couple of stilts!—And then, that top to his wig, my dear child—

Mrs. Air. Gives a fashionable turn to his face; and then adds to the height.

Air. It has, indeed, my soul, a prodigious happy effect.—A block, popping out of a hair-cutter's window, up two pair of stairs, in the Strand.—And then, that bunch at his back—

Flaw. Hush! here comes the lady.

Enter MRS. FLEECE'EM.

This, madam, is the family for whom I told you I had so warm an affection: and this the young gentleman whose alliance I recommended for Miss.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Toby!

Mrs. Fl. I make no doubt, madam, but my niece will think herself happy in an union with so accomplished a person.

Air. Why, as to that, Toby, Mrs. ——, what is the gentlewoman's name?

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'em.

Air. I recollect, madam, going some years ago with one of that name in the stage-coach, to York—we were overturned about a mile beyond Newark—the parson of the parish—he became afterwards a prebend of Worcester, in the room of old Walter Wench'em, who was cast in a suit of *crim. con.* by Sir Timothy Tallyho, remarkable for the best pack of hounds in the country——

Mrs. Air. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Aircastle!

Flaw. Have a care! you have forgot.

Air. I am dumb.

Mrs. Fl. Pray, madam, has the young gentleman travelled?

Mrs. Air. Who? Toby?

Air. Why, madam, I did once intend—but Sir Roger Ramble—who, I am told, will be strongly opposed next election for the borough of Barnstaple, by Sir Walter Win'em — who, during

the whole time of Sir Robert Walpole's admin——

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I beg pardon, but the lady directed the question to me.

Air. True, my angel; and I am sure nobody can give a better answer than dear Mrs. Aircastle——

Mrs. Air. You are very polite.

Air. But I was willing to save you the trouble, my soul.

Mrs. Air. I shall think it no trouble to satisfy the lady's inquiries.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, it was a matter of curiosity only:—there is, besides, an elegance, a *je ne scai quoi*, in your son's air, that is rarely acquired in this country.

Mrs. Air. Did not I tell you the prodigious power of grace?

Air. Yes; but I could never have believed it.

Mrs. Air. Pray, madam, is the young lady at home?

Mrs. Fl. Just lain down for a little: the change of climate has given her a slight indisposition; but a few days, I dare say, will restore her.

Mrs. Air. Miss, I presume, has a physician?

Air. A what? a physician, my life, for a little sea-sickness?! Why, Doctor Diet, at Margate, who, by the by, intends to settle in London—his aunt, Major Mortar's widow—who was killed by a bomb at the taking of Goree—Tom Truant, an old school-fellow of mine, was close by his side—Tom Tru——

Mrs. Air. Dear Mr. Aircastle, what has all this to do with the young lady's illness?

Air. I was coming to that, my soul, if you will let me. I don't know how it happens; in general, nobody is better bred than Mrs. Aircastle; but to-

day she will not let me bring out a word.—So, madam, Tom Truant, as I was——

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I must interrupt you.

Air. You must?

Mrs. Air. I can't suffer it, upon this lady's account.

Air. It was for her sake, my soul, I was speaking.—So, madam, Tom Truant——

Mrs. Air. If you persist, I shall quit the house, I assure you.

Air. Quit the house?

Mrs. Air. This very instant.

Air. Zounds, madam, if you come to that, you may go to the——

Mrs. Air. Any where to get rid of your absurd——

Air. For that matter, you can't be more willing than I.

Mrs. Air. Then, madam, I take my leave.

Air. When you will: this lady and I can easily settle matters without you.—So, madam, as I was saying, Tom Tru——

Flaw. For heaven's sake, sir!—Mrs. Aircastle, be calm!—when things are just bringing to bear—

Air. All I meant, was for the service of Miss.

Mrs. Fl. Very obliging, indeed. I should be sorry if any difference should arise on my niece's account: besides, her illness is so trifling, that the young gentleman may, if he pleases, step into her room to inquire after her health.

Mrs. Air. Toby will be very happy, I am sure. You see, madam, what the lad is.

Mrs. Fl. A most agreeable youth, I must own; and then his silence is a modest mark of his merit.

Air. Do you hear that, Mrs. Air——

Mrs. Air. Yes; and I hope it will make a pro-

per impression on you.—You, doubtless, madam, know the taste of your niece; may we hope that Toby has any chance of succeeding?

Mrs. Fl. She was prodigiously pleased with Mr. Flaw's account of his parents; which, indeed, I now find to be true in every respect.

Air. and Mrs. Air. Oh, madam!

Mrs. Fl. And, as to fortune, she is totally careless in that, her own being much more than sufficient.

Air. How manly that is in a woman!—I remember, Miss Patty Plumb, of Jamaica, did the very same—they say her grandfather was transported for robbing a hen-roost——

Mrs. Air. But, as to his figure, madam; do you apprehend it will strike her? Toby, hold up your head!

Mrs. Fl. I can see no reason against it: indeed, the young gentleman has rather a fairer complexion than what she has been commonly used to; the natives of India, from their climate, have rather a sallower hue.

Mrs. Air. True, madam.

Mrs. Fl. But, if necessary, that may be easily altered by art; some saffron, or snuff, just skimmed over his face——

Mrs. Air. Quickly.

Air. I have a box of Scotch in my pocket; it may be done in an instant.

Mrs. Fl. Their hair, too, is most commonly dark; but a little German blacking here on each of the eyebrows——

To. If a burnt cork will do, I have one in my pocket.

Air. Mr. Flaw, will you ring for a candle?

Mrs. Fl. There is no necessity, now; we have

been obliged to shut out the light, as her eyes are rather tender and weak, with looking so long on nothing but water.

Mrs. Air. True, madam. Well, madam, we will detain you no longer: I am sure, it is impossible to say how much we are obliged——you may rely upon it, we shall ever be grateful.

Mrs. Fl. I don't in the least doubt it: Mr. Flaw has, I presume, hinted my situation?

Mrs. Air. Most minutely: Mr. Aircastle has prepared the deposit. You have the needful?

Air. All but five hundred pounds, which you may have in the evening: I lent it just now to a—the story will make you laugh, I am sure: as I was going out, Colonel—who commanded last war——

Mrs. Air. Is this a time for a story?

Flaw. Fy, fy! despatch, Mr. Aircastle!

Mrs. Air. Here all the bills are.

Flaw. Nay, hold a little, I beg. This, you know, is a kind of compact; there are conditions to be performed on both sides: therefore, the money should, I think, be lodged in neutral hands till the material point is complied with.

Mrs. Air. There is no occasion.

Mrs. Fl. I can have no objection, I am sure: where, then, shall we place it?

Mrs. Air. Mr. Flaw is a friend to both parties—

Air. True; the properest man in the world.

Mrs. Fl. I am not quite so certain of that.

[*Aside.*

Air. There, there the bills are, Mr. Flaw.

Mrs. Air. Now, we will leave Toby and the lady together.

Air. Toby don't forget to deliver the presents.

To. I have them here in a box.

Air. Mind your behaviour, my good lad.—I wish we had time, though, to doctor his face: against their next meeting, I will do it myself; I will manage that matter, I warrant: I learnt the art, last autumn, of a parcel of strollers; they had been playing, during the dog-days, with one Foote, in this town—a fellow, they say, who takes people off, and——

Mrs. Air. Nay, Mr. Aircastle, come along, I beseech you.

Air. Well, well! you are always in such a damnable hurry.

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Flaw, you are not going, I hope; because I wanted just to speak a few words——

Flaw. I shall be back in a minute.

[*Exeunt* FLAW, MR. *and* MRS. AIRCASTLE.

Mrs. Fl. This, sir, this is the door; tread softly.

To. Had not I better pull off my shoes?

Mrs. Fl. No occasion for that. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—Another Room. MARIANNE *in Bed.*

Enter MRS. FLEECE'EM *and* TOBY.

Mrs. Fl. This way; your hand.—Letty, my dear, the young gentleman I mentioned to you this morning, begs just to inquire after your health. There; I will leave you together: she is in the bed at the upper end of the room. I make no doubt, sir, but you will behave with proper decorum. [*Exit.*

To. If you are afraid, you need not go out of the room.—The place is as dark as a dungeon! Upper end of the room! and how the deuce should I know which that is? In the night, I can tell you, I should be a good deal frightened to be so much

in the dark, but it is well enough in the day, when one is about to make love; because why, one is not so bashful and shy; one can see to speak one's mind with more boldness and courage, than in the light.—Me—Miss! I thought she had spoke; may be not. If I could but get hold of the curtains—the best way will be to creep close by the wall; then I shall be sure to—Miss! Miss!

Mar. Who be dat dere?

To. I.—*Dat dere!* One may find out by her tongue she is a foreigner: I am pretty right, now, I believe. What, Miss, are you sick?

Mar. Iss.

To. But you are better, I hope?

Mar. Iss.

To. I am glad on't: then, I suppose, Miss, if you please, I may begin to make love?

Mar. Iss.

To. Iss! gad, I think it is ready made to my hands.—Did the gentlewoman, Mrs. Madam, your aunt, say any thing about and concerning of me?

Mar. Iss.

To. Is it a secret?

Mar. Iss.

To. Oh, then it would not be manners to ax: well, Miss, I hope you ben't averse to the match?

Mar. Iss.

To. Adzooks, then we are all off in an instant. What, Miss, I suppose you ben't willing to have me?

Mar. Iss.

To. Oh, then, we are on again, as before: then I may produce, I believe; I have brought you, miss, some curiosities, by way of presentation, here in my pocket: will you please to accept——

Mar. Iss.

To. Here, then, I offer them up to the shrine

of thy beauty. May I crave leave to kiss your lily-white hand?

Mar. Iss.

To. On my knees let me thank you, fairest creature!—Her skin is vast soft. They be wonderful pretty things I have brought you; a'n't you mighty curious to see them?

Mar. Iss.

To. May I draw up the curtain a bit, only just to give you a glimpse?

Mar. Iss.

To. So I will—I should be glad to have a peep at her, too; she is a mighty agreeable body; does not talk much, indeed: but is vast sensible, whatever she says. This, I believe, is the string. I wonder if she is as handsome as Betsy Blossom: gad, if she is, Miss Blossom must look out for somebody else, I can tell her. That's high enough, I believe.—That there thing in the leather case is a watch; if you touch the nob that juts out, it strikes all the world like a clock; mother has one, but then him is as big as a warming-pan. Perhaps, miss, you mayn't find the trick out: I'll show you.—Hey! what is this? Lord have mercy on me! she is turned all of a sudden as black as a crow! sure as can be, a judgement for forsaking poor Betsy.

Mar. Massa, wo'n't you come here?

To. Not I.

Mar. I come to you, den.

To. The devil you will? you must run pretty fast then.—Keep off me; holloa! house! stop the black thing that is hard at my—— [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. FLEECE'EM.

Mrs. Fl. The rude puppy had like to have run

over me: what is the meaning—ha, the curtain drawn up! nay, then—Marianne, who opened the window?

Mar. Little massa, to show me de tick-tick—

Mrs. Fl. Fool, did not I tell you—but it was my own fault, to trust such an idiot! Go, get out of my sight. [*Exit* MAR.

Enter FLAW.

Flaw. What the deuce is the matter? Toby is scampering down the street as if he had a legion of——

Mrs. Fl. Matter! why, he has discovered the wench.

Flaw. 'Sdeath! I told you the folly of trusting these—we shall all be blown up in an instant: I saw the mother stop her chariot at the sight of the whelp; so, I suppose, we shall have her back in a——

Mrs. Fl. Ay! then something must be suddenly done.

Flaw. Done! but what?—I'll run after the boy, and hear his account of the matter.

Mrs. Fl. Stay! had not you better, Mr. Flaw, just leave with me Mr. Aircastle's deposit?

Flaw. Pho! time enough; is this a season to settle accounts? [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. So! I suppose he will march off with the money at last: I would have done as much if I could but have touched it.

Enter MRS. AIRCASTLE.

Mrs. Air. Dear madam, I am in the utmost confusion! I am afraid that wild boy has misbehaved himself, in some manner or other.

Mrs. Fl. A little mistake, madam; but I pro-

test, my niece is so terrified, that she is unable to give me any account——

Mrs. Air. Some rude prank of his, I dare say; I never could get his father——

Enter COLONEL GORGET.

Gor. The house is in such confusion, that I can't get any body to give me an answer.—Mrs. Aircastle!

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Colonel Gorget! who thought of meeting you here?

Gor. An odd affair; but this lady, I suppose, Mrs. Fleece'em, will be so kind as to explain it. A pretty young lad, an ensign of mine, has, I am afraid, been tricked out of a large sum of money by one Flaw, a fellow of very bad fame.

Mrs. Air. How? Flaw!

Gor. Under pretence of gaining promotion by this lady's assistance.

Mrs. Fl. Mine, sir! I promise you this is the first mention I ever heard of the matter.

Gor. Just, madam, as I suspected: but pray, Mrs. Aircastle, have you long had the honour of this lady's acquaintance?

Mrs. Air. Acquaintance! Lord, colonel, I am terrified out of my wits. Your ear for a moment.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A note, madam, which you are desired directly to read.

Mrs. Fl. Flaw's hand. [*Reads.*] "The game is up—we are blown—make off as fast as you can." As matters stand, the best advice I can take.

[*Going off.*

Mrs. Air. Madam, you are not going to leave us?

Mrs. Fl. Only just to inquire how my niece does after her fright: I shall be back immediately. [*Exit.*

Gor. How! is it possible? a capital sum! good heavens! madam, and how could you trust it without consulting some friend?

Mrs. Air. Why, we both thought Mr. Flaw—

Gor. Flaw! an infamous——

Enter MR. AIRCASTLE.

Air. Why, what the deuce has been the matter amongst you? They tell me Toby has been at home, frightened out of his wits; and then run out directly with the waiter, and some wench or other. I have sent your Roger in search of the whelp—ah, colonel, are you there?

Gor. Came the minute before you.

Air. Well, colonel, hey, how? What, I suppose, by being here so soon, your affair has miscarried.

Gor. You are mistaken, indeed, my good friend.

Mrs. Air. What affair?

Air. I forgot to tell it you child; of a fine lass in this town that sets up her person for sale——

Mrs. Air. How!

Air. And had the modesty to fix the price to the colonel at five hundred guineas?

Mrs. Air. Abominable! can there be such creatures?

Air. Ask the colonel, that is all: an infamous harpy!

Gor. Dear Mr. Aircastle, you are here in an error.

Air. Error! why, did not you tell me of a line she sent you?

Gor. Very true.

Air. And did not I advance the cash?

Gor. Do I pretend to deny it?

Air. Well, then!

Gor. Your patience a moment, my dear friend! I gave her the money, it is true——

Air. There, Mrs. Aircastle! did not I tell you——

Gor. But then, like a woman of honour——

Air. Well?

Gor. She told me that she did it but to try the strength of my passion——

Air. Pho! pho!

Gor. And so immediately returned it again.

Air. Pshaw! a bam, Mrs. Aircastle; don't believe it, my dear.

Gor. To put the matter out of dispute, I returned to your lodging directly; when, not finding you, I delivered the cash to your lady——

Air. Indeed!

Gor. In the very individual bag that you gave me; and before master Toby, your son.

Air. Ay! and have you got the money, my dear?

Mrs. Air. Yes, yes; I received it—was ever woman so duped! but this town is full of cozeners. [*Aside.*

Gor. I am afraid, Mr. Aircastle, that it was pretty lucky for you I happened to have the cash in my hand.

Air. Lucky! I don't understand——

Gor. Otherwise, it might have flown away with the rest.

Air. Flown away?

Gor. By what Mrs. Aircastle has told me, I shrewdly suspect you are got into the hands of some villanous sharpers.

Air. How!

Gor. Mr. Flaw and his coadjutrix. — Within!

who's there?—But we shall soon get the business explained.

Enter a SERVANT.

Gor. Do you live with the person who inhabits this house?

Serv. But a very short time.

Gor. We wish to see her directly.

Serv. She is gone out.

Gor. I thought so: and her niece, too, I suppose?

Serv. Her niece, sir?

Gor. Ay.

Serv. I know no niece she has.

Air. and Mrs. Air. How!

Gor. Just as I suspected: now, sir, do you begin to find what a situation you are in?

Air. Then I am totally ruined! I told you, Mrs. Aircastle, what would come of your—I remember Martin Moneytrap, of the Minories, was once in the very same way—he was taken in by a Portuguese Jew——

Gor. A truce to recrimination, I beg; we have more material business in hand: let this woman be directly pursued; and endeavour to recover, at least, a part of——

O'Flan. [*without.*] Pray step in a bit, if you plase, and refund freely the bill, or, upon my soul, I'll make you do me the favour by force!

Enter O'FLANNAGAN *with* MRS. FLEECE'EM.

All. Mrs. Fleece'em!

O'Flan. Yes, yes, it is, sure enough; she overtook me, as I met her hard by.

Gor. We are obliged to you, then, for the lady's return?

O'Flan. You may say that: I stopped her just in the nick, as she was slily walking off in a coach. Arrah, put off your hood, my dear honey; don't be shame-faced amongst your friends and acquaintance.

Mrs. Fl. Stand off, you rude brute!

O'Flan. Better words, if you plase! you wanted to send me to be feathered abroad; so, in return, I shall beg lave, madam, to pluck you at home.

Gor. No violence to the lady, I beg, sir! she now finds she is detected, and, I dare say, will do every body all the justice she can. And, first, madam, as to the capital sum which you had the address to obtain from this——

Mrs. Fl. What concern have I in the business? the gentleman himself gave it into the possession of Flaw.

Gor. Mr. Aircastle!

Air. That's true, I confess.

Gor. But, since that, has not the property suffered a transfer?

Mrs. Fl. Not to me: but, if you doubt it, you may search the house when you please.

Gor. Then it has got into worse hands, I'm afraid.

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. I see, by their confusion, my information was right.—Not to interrupt you, madam, I should take it as a particular favour if you would immediately return the little note I left in your hands—for I have not a moment to spare.

Mrs. Fl. Note, madam! what note? I recollect, indeed, a hymn that you——

Mrs. Sim. Well, madam, that hymn, if you please.

Mrs. Fl. I gave it directly to Flaw, to get a friend of his to set it to music.

Mrs. Sim. Music! Ladies and gentlemen, a bank-note, I protest!

Air. What! set a bank-note to music? I never heard such a thing.

Gor. And pray, madam, what could induce you to trust that woman with a bank-note?

Mrs. Fl. That she will not so readily own; a little earnest of a much larger bribe to procure her husband a living.

Gor. How, madam! I hope your husband was not apprised of this application?

Mrs. Sim. The doctor was totally ignorant; knew nothing about it.

Gor. I am very happy to hear it: I should be sorry to find that a gentleman, whose duty it is to sustain the purity of his profession, should himself be the very person to soil it; or, that an office of so sacred a nature should be solicited by such unsanctified means.

Mrs. Sim. I believe, my doctor, sir, will be hardly suspected: but I have not time to say more for the present; I shall be stayed for, and have not a moment to spare. [*Exit.*

Gor. Let her go! that plunder, however, is fair.

Air. Well, well! but, colonel, notwithstanding all that you say, I have heard there was a bet once made between the patron of a living and one parson Plurality—Plurality had been a presbyterian—his father keeps a pastry-cook's shop in Spring-gardens—just where Cox's museum—by the by, they tell me, Cox will get devilish rich by his lottery.

Gor. But, if we don't use some despatch, I am afraid you will get devilish poor.

Enter PRIG, *in a Waistcoat and Cap.*

Prig. Where is this damned infernal—she is burrowed here, but I'll make her——

Air. Who the deuce can this be?

Mrs. Fl. Some madman escaped from his keepers, I reckon.

Prig. Yes, yes, I am escaped; but not mad: and, if there is law to be had, I'll make you to know—keepers!—if I had not luckily met with some friends at the turnpike, I should have been kept pretty close, I believe. I recollected your footman that stood at the door, and guessed you were not far off.

Air. What, is this a madman? I went to see one once in Bedlam—he— [*Exit* PRIG.

Enter ROGER.

Air. Oh, here is Roger. Well, did you find where Toby is?

Roger. Yes, yes, I found un out; and in sweet company, too.

Mrs. Air. Company!

Roger. A clergyman, Betsy Blossom, and our waiter at home.

Air. Zounds! I hope the boy is not married.

Roger. No? but they would have been if I had not come just in the nick to fetch un away.

Air. Where is he?

Roger. In a shop at the corner. I wanted un to step over; but he would not, because why, he says as how the house is haunted.

Air. And why not? There was the manor-house in the parish of Paddington—Mrs. Aircastle, you may remember it formerly belonged to the Jessops; but, by the marriage of the heiress with one of the Haslewoods——

Gor. Come, come, it is a lucky prevention; and, to give you a little consolation, I believe I shall be able to recover your money from Flaw.

Mrs. Air. and Air. How, colonel?

Gor. I took the liberty, by way of prevention, to get him secured for the money received of my ensign.

Air. Indeed!

Gor. And, as this affair is rather of a criminal nature, he will think himself happy to escape by restoring the plunder.

Air. My kind colonel!

Gor. I hope, madam, this will make you amends for your disappointment in the five hundred pounds. [*Aside.*

O'Flan. But what the divil is all this to my bill?

Gor. Did this woman receive it?

Mrs. Fl. Flaw had it; but it wants some days of being due.

Gor. Then, we shall be able to stop the payment, at least! it is safe, never fear.

O'Flan. That's lucky, however: and, by all I can hear, my best way, Mr. Colonel, will be to make an emigration back to Ireland again.

Gor. By all means; and, by this time, many more of your countrymen would, I believe, be glad to follow your steps.

O'Flan. Like enough.

Air. And if, Mrs. Aircastle, we were to return back again——

Gor. It would be the wisest thing you could do.

Mrs. Air. What, to vegetate, like a parcel of plants?

Gor. Ay, madam; for, there are trees that

wo'n't bear transplanting; they thrive best in their natural soil.

Air. That's true, I can answer. Last summer, I transplanted some elm-trees——

Gor. Lord! Mr. Aircastle, how can you—

Air. Zounds! I mustn't speak—Sir, let me tell you the story of the elm. [*To O'Flan.*

Gor. You, madam, till you have made all the satisfaction you can, must be contented to suffer a little confinement; after which, unless your country should have some other call upon you, you may dispose of yourself as you please.

Mrs. Fl. I am detected, distressed, and must therefore submit! But, gentlemen, if all who have offended like us, were, like us, produced to the public, much higher names would adorn the Old-Bailey Chronicle than those of poor Fleece'em and Flaw.

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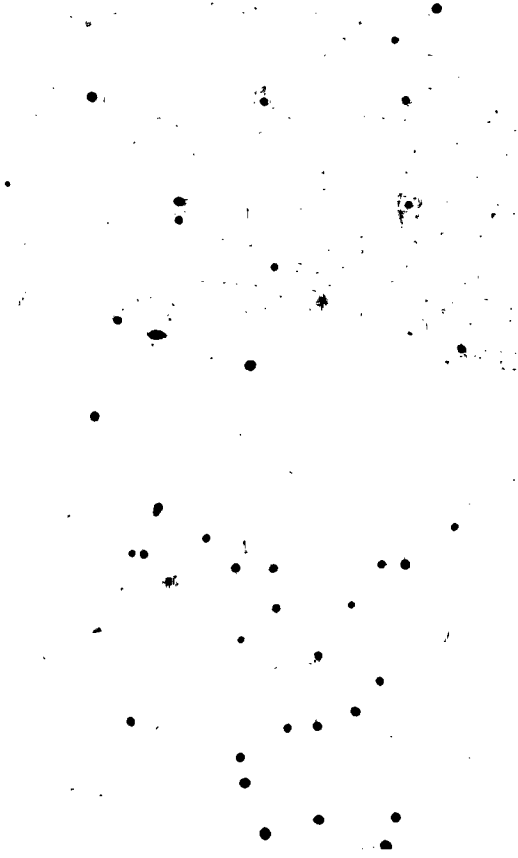


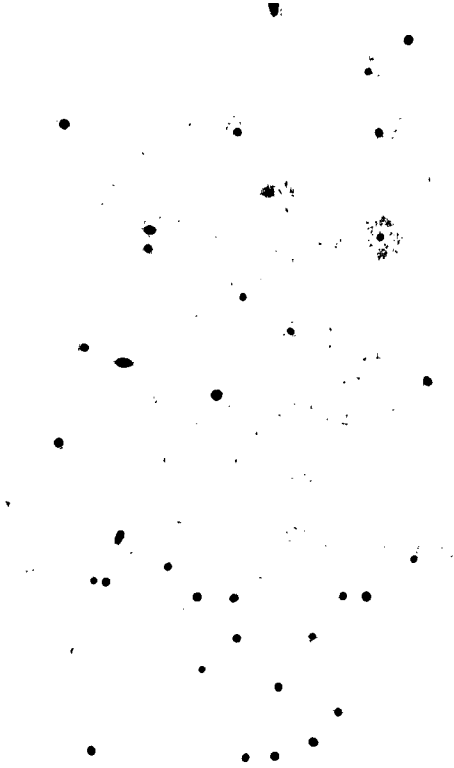
A TRIP TO CALAIS;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As originally written,

AND INTENDED FOR REPRESENTATION.



REMARKS.

WRITTEN and prepared for representation in the summer of 1776, this comedy was stopped *in limine*, by the stage-licenser, for the very reason that it ought to have come forth in the form intended. The character of *Lady Kitty Crocodile* included an excellent satire on the celebrated lady who then, and for a few years after, bore the title of Duchess of Kingston, and whose sexual foibles it was impossible even to caricature on the stage: her enactments in private life, and her public exhibitions, were a reproach to the age. Yet had that woman sufficient *influence* to interpose the Lord Chamberlain's negative upon the appearance of the *Trip to Calais* on the stage.

The press, however, was not to be so shackled; and the author's appeal to the public, through that channel, proved highly triumphant; for the rapid sale of several large impressions, and the universal approbation of his readers, assured Foote that he had happily hit, with *just satire*, a great and notorious public offender. Her trial and subsequent degradation, by *the Peers*, bear testimony to the writer's discrimination in the selection of her Grace for the stage, though affording but a poor apology for any lameness in the piece. Such, however, is not to be found; and it reads as well in the closet as it would have acted upon the stage.

Further traits of French character and Frenchified morals are herein developed with our author's usual felicity. That of the *refugee*, O'Donnovan, is one of the best drawn scoundrels in lower life that is to be met with in a month's *voyaging* even in France. Both are transferred into the piece *as acted* subsequently under the title of *The Capuchin*.

On the score of the suppression of *the Trip*, the fact itself ought to occasion less surprise than should the guilty means by which a knowledge of such a piece being in the hands of the censor could reach the ears of the culprit Duchess and her advisers; nothing short of a foul betrayal of trust can account for a dereliction of duty, which, we have reason to apprehend, was but too common.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
COLONEL CROSBY.	LADY KITTY CROCODILE.
O'DONNOVAN.	MISS LYDELL.
MINNIKIN.	MRS. MINNIKIN.
KIT CODLING.	MRS. CLACK.
DICK DRUGGET.	JENNY MINNIKIN.
LUKE LAPPELLE.	HETTY.
GREGORY GINGHAM.	ABBESS.
TROMFORT.	NUN.
KIT CABLE.	
LA JEUNESSE.	
SERVANT.	

Soldiers, Porters, Shoe-Blacks, &c.

SCENE—Calais.

A TRIP TO CALAIS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE.—Hotel d'Angleterre.

Enter KIT CABLE, DICK DRUGGET, *and* JENNY MINNIKIN.

Ca. HARKEE, messmate! look about! you had better bring-to in this creek: here you will find the best moorings. The *Hotel d'Angleterre* they calls it in French; but you'll find the names of things plaguily transmogrified all along this coast.

Dick. They be civil people, no doubt.

Ca. Civil! ay, ay; if you will bring a good cargo of cash, you are welcome to anchor here as long as you list: but you will find the duties high at out-clearance; therefore, take care, d'ye see, and don't run aground. I must take t'other trip to the port, for your stowage [*luggage*].

[*Exit.*

Dick. I hope by this time your sea-sickness is pretty well gone.

Jen. Much mended, dear Dicky, I thank you.

Dick. Well, my dear Jenny, here we are, safely landed in the French country, however.

And now, what's next to be done? Consider, my love, we have not a moment to lose; your father will not be long behind us, I am sure.

Jen. No question of that; therefore, our best way will be to get out of his power as soon as we can.

Dick. By what means?

Jen. By the means which we came hither in search of; by being married, you know.

Dick. True: but how the deuce shall we procure a parson? Perhaps, the man of the house may assist us: but plague on't! I can't *parley Francee*; though I understand a few words here and there.

Jen. But I can, Dicky, you know. What, do you think I was five years at Madam Vansloppin's, the Swiss French boarding-school, at Edmonton, for nothing at all?

Dick. True, true; I had forgot.—But I don't think it any mark of their manners to let us wait here so long without asking us in. Here, house, house!

Jen. Peace, Dicky! how is it possible they should know what you want?—*Maison! seignior de terre!*

Dick. Who? what?

Jen. Seignior de terre is as much as to say, landlord, in English.

Dick. True, true. Oh! here the man comes.

Enter MONSIEUR TROMFORT.

Tromf. Monsieur! Mademoiselle!

Dick. To him, Jenny.

Jen. Monsieur, nous sommes Anglois, et nous avons grand occasion d'un prêtre?

Tromf. A quoi faire?

Jen. Faire? pour nous joindre, lui et moi, ensemble, I think.

Dick. That is marriage, she and me? you understand me, mounseer?

Tromf. Ah-ha! *pour le mariage! très bien;* perfectly vell, sare.

Dick. Gad's my life, he speaks English! how lucky we were in the choice of a house.—And what may your name be, mounseer?

Trom. Tromfort, at your ver good service.

Dick. Why, look'ee! Mounseer Tromfort; in a word, our business is this: this here young gentlewoman and I——

Jen. Stop, Dicky, and let me explain matters to Monsieur Tromfort; because why, I speak the the language, you know.

Dick. But, miss, our landlord understands English.

Jen. No matter; don't contradict me, Dicky; you know, I could not never bear that from a child. You must know, then, monsieur, that Mr. Matthew Minnikin, my father, is one of the most respectable pin-makers in the whole city of London; and that I am his daughter.

Tromf. Ah, ha! I understand; Maister Minicky, *gros marchand d'épingle? c'est tout simple.*

Jen. And this here young man that you see, is Dicky Drugget, father's 'prentice at home.

Tromf. Fort bien! ver vell.

Jen. Now, father being minded to provide me a husband, for fear I should otherwise provide one for myself——

Tromf. Fort bien! dat vas ver vell fancy: Pardie, Monsieur Minicky hav a great deal of wit!

Jen. Yes, well enough, if so be that he had

got me a man to my mind; but he was so undutiful as never to think of consulting of me.

Tromf. Oh, fy, fy, Monsieur Minicky! dat vas terrible ting.

Jen. Ay, was it not, monsieur? quite monstrous, as a body may say; and so you would own, if you was to see the creature he fixed on: Kit Codling, a fat fishmonger, hard by the 'Change. They say the man is well enough to pass through the world; one of the livery, a pretty good speechifier, minds his shop, and is careful and sober; but, Lord, what signifies that? he has no more idear of dress than a Dutchman; and, as to cotillions, I suppose he knows as much about them as a cow.

Tromf. Oh, fy, fy! *Mauvaise partie*, bad partie!

Jen. And so, Dicky and I, being bred up together, as it were, and being a genteelish, virtuous young man——

Tromf. Ah, vas *très gentile.*

Jen. Yes; for except lying out all night now and then, hating to be so vulgar as to stay in the shop, frequenting the tavern in search of good company, running his father in debt for his credit, and gracing his conversation with the oaths most in fashion, I don't believe the lad has a single vice in the world.

Tromf. Dat is ver extraordinaire.

Jen. And yet, you can't think what an orationing father used to make every day: but, between you and I, monsieur, father and mother are but a couple of fogrum old fools; ben't they, Dicky?

Dick. To say truth, little better, my dear.

Jen. Why, what a noise they made about my only running from school for three or four days

with Monsieur Chasson, our *maître de dance*, just as if they thought I would never come back again; ha, ha!

Dick. To say truth, mounseer, Miss Jenny amongst them, had but a very bad time of it; for this, I must confess to her face, she is the most best-temper'dest girl in the world; for, let her but say and do what she pleases, and you will scarcely hear a cross word come out of her mouth in a month.

Tromf. Vraiment!

Dick. Then, to prove what a dutiful daughter she always has been, she constantly used to steal out to see Breslaw, the plays, and hear Signiora Gamberbelly, at the opera, on purpose to prevent their being tired with her company at home.

Tromf. Ver considerate!

Dick. And, whenever the old folks charged her with doing any thing wrong, she never told them a word of truth in her life.

Tromf. No!

Dick. No; for fear of making her parents uneasy.

Tromf. Ver *aimable* indeed!

Jen. Nay, monsieur; Dicky was always very partial to me, and so, we taking a fancy to one another, and to prevent father from exposing himself by such a ridiculous choice as Kit Codling, we agreed to give the old ones the slip, and take a little tour to the kingdom of France.

Tromf. Bien imaginée! dat vas vell imagine!

Dick. And so, mounseer——

Jen. Nay, Dicky, don't interrupt me, my dear! —And so, as I was a saying, if you can contrive to procure us a marrying doctor, for I am told there are one or two who have set up in that way

in this town, we shall take it, monsieur, as a very particular favour.

Tromf. I shall be ve happy, *très charmée!* to be capable to serve a-you.

Jen. Vast polite! and, indeed, as I have often told Dicky, the French always are so.

Tromf. Indeed, I have great regard for de Englis; and, when they come over, I never refuse my protection.

Jen. Mighty civil, indeed!

Tromf. Why, every summer dere come here to my house a great many my-lors; and I let 'em stay two, tree months, just as long as dey please.

Dick. What, for nothing, mounseer?

Tromf. Presque la même chose; almost de very same ting; dey never pay noding at all, only just for dere eating, drinking, and sleeping.

Jen. How generous and noble!

Tromf. Yes; I always have great *penchant*, great partiality, for dose of your country. Vy, dere vas, some time ago, ven my house and my good vas burn down by de fire, I never vas take noding at all from de French.

Dick. No!

Tromf. Pas une sous; but suffer my lors Anglois to build a my hotel up again to dere own taste, without the least interruption.

Dick. How kind, to give that preference to us!

Jen. That, indeed, was the very excess of good breeding.

Tromf. And ven dey bring over good many guinea, lumbering heavy great ting, I make de change vid de louis, dat vas so pretty, and as light as de cork.

Jen. How disinterested!

Tromf. And, as I know Messieurs les Anglois come here to improve demselves by travel in France, I advise dem always to stay here as long as dey can, and never to tink of going home till all dare monies be gone.

Dick. What a fine thing it is to get such a friend in foreign parts!

Jeu. True, Dicky. Well, but, monsieur, do you think you can provide us with the party we want?

Tromf. Pour la mariage? for marry you? dere is no doubt.

Dick. But there is no time, mounseer, to be lost; for we expect miss's father and mother to follow us in the very first ship.

Tromf. Dere is de Doctor Coupler live just-a by, in de very next street.

Jeu. Then send for him directly.

Tromf. Very probable he is not at home at dis time.

Dick. No!

Tromf. He commonly take de opportunity of dese dark night, to step cross de Shannel, and supply his friend on t'oder side vid de brandy and tea.

Dick. Oh, what, I reckon, the doctor smuggles a little?

Tromf. Yes, for little amusement, just *pour passer le temps*; for he is ver fond of de sea.

Dick. Will you inquire, mounseer, if we cannot meet with the doctor?

Tromf. A l'instant; dis ver moment.

Enter a very old WAITER.

Eh bien? La Jeunesse! vat is de matter?

La Jeu. Dere is anoder vessel from Dover, just-a put into de port.

Dick. Is there? Then ten to one your father is in her.

Tromf. Dat vill be ver *mal-à-propos!*

Dick. Hadn't I better run down to the quay, and take a peep at who lands?

Tromf. By all mean; de very best dought in de vorld.

Dick. Stay you here, miss; I will be back in a trice. [*Exit.*

Tromf. A ver pritty gentleman, dat Maister Druggy.

Jen. Yes, Dicky is thought very well on.

Tromf. He has ver great head; *beaucoup de politique!*

Jen. Yes, yes; he has wit enough when he will.

Tromf. Ma foi, Maister Dicky be *fort heureux!* a ver happy man, to be sure!

Jen. How so, Monsieur Tromfort?

Tromf. How so? *pardie,* to have engage de affection of so *aimable* a mademoiselle.

Jen. Dear me, monsieur, and d'ye think so?

Tomf. Assurement.

Jen. Really! But you French are so given to flattery!

Tromf. Point de tout, not at all! Vill you permit a me, mademoiselle, just to have de honour to kiss a your hand?

Jen. My hand, monsieur! what good can that do you?

Tromf. Ah! my God! how fine! vite as snow, and as soft as de silk! Vat vould I give to be that dere Monsieur Dicky!

Jen. Why, is it possible, monsieur, that you can think me equal to your own country ladies?

Tromf. Ah, mademoiselle, dere is no compari-

son at all in de vorld. Vat havock your charm vould make in dis contry!

Jen. I am not quite so certain of that.

Tromf. Dere is no doubt at all: *pour la preuve*; de very first a Frenchmans you vas see, is proud to drow himself at your feet.

Jen. At mine? who can that be, monsieur?

Tromf. Votre très humble, mademoiselle; it is *moi*, me myself.

Jen. You!

Tromf. Moi. Permit a me, mademoiselle, to declare de force of my passion, dat burn my ver—

Jen. For me! why, I have scarce been in your company a couple of minutes.

Tromf. Von instant is enough for your charm to make a de conquest; de very first glance, your bright eyes shoot me quite to de heart. Ah! how it make a me pat, pat, pat, pat! *Eait moi l' honneur* to place-a your hand just here a my side.

Jen. Here is an audacious old fop! I'll try how far the impudent puppy will go.—Why, really, monsieur, you're so amiable, and your manners so very polite and so civil, that, if it had not been for a prior engagement, I don't know but I might be tempted to listen.

Tromf. Courage, Monsieur Tromfort! Stay but littel time, Maister Dicky, begar I make you a coucou before you vas marry [*aside*].—Engagement! vat is dat?

Jen. The young man you saw here but now.

Tromf. Maister Dicky? ver vell.

Jen. We are come over hither to marry, you know.

Tromf. Vy not?

Jen. What! and, at the same time, encourage another's addresses?

Tromf. To be sure. *In France,* de lady always take de husband to make sure of de lover; de one *pour la politique,* de oder for de passion.

Jen. Ay; but what would my countrywomen say at so very quick a——

Tromf. Say? ah, ah! she begin to capitulate [*aside*].—Say? dat you take de ver vise step. Oh, mademoiselle, dere be many pritty my-lady who wait at my hotel for de vind, dat can tell many comic story of Monsieur Tromfort.

Jen. Oh, I don't doubt it at all!—Was there ever such an impudent coxcomb!—If one did but know, indeed, the name of some of the ladies, it would be a kind of excuse.

Tromf. Pardonnez moi! jamais de man of honour never tell de name of de lady. *La voies!* looky here! look at dis *plumet;* dis pritty white fedder [*shows a shabby white feather*]; dis trophy of my victory I received from de hand of de pritty my-lady.

Jen. That, indeed, is a proof; and yet, monsieur, it is a sort of wonder, too, for you are not over young, nor, between ourselves, remarkably handsome; and, besides all that, you have but one eye.

Tromf. Dat is true; but den consider, mademoiselle, dat de little god, Cupid, has got never a von.

Jen. Right; and I believe the lady must have been nearly as blind as the god.

Tromf. Not at all; but, *ma chere* mademoiselle, we lose time; and Maister Dicky may come back from de port. Dere is, in dis littel room, de ver pritt picter, which permit-a me to have de honour to show you.

Jen. Nay, but, monsieur——

Tromf. Dere must be a littel compulsion to make de lady do vat she like. [*Pulls her.*] *Venez ma!*

Jen. Hands off, you insolent ruffian!

[*Strikes him.*

Tromf. Diable!

Jen. The vanity and impudence of this fellow exceeds all the accounts I have heard of his country.

Tromf. By gar, for de soft hand, it is de most hard I ever vas feel!

Jen. Not half so much as you merit. A pretty account you give of the English; and a fine return for all the favours you have received at their hands!

Tromf. Pardie, c'est une espèce de virago.—Mais, mademoiselle!

Jen. However, the gentleman will soon be back, and return you thanks for this piece of civility.

Tromf. Mais, mademoiselle, you vas know de mode of dis country, de littel gallantry to de pretty fine vomans.

Jen. Gallantry! what, from a fellow like you, a pitiful publican?

Tromf. Diable; publican! dat be good enough for de maker of pin.

Jen. Here he comes.

Enter DICK DRUGGET.

Dick. Zounds! miss, here they all be.

Jen. All! who?

Dick. Father, mother, and your aunt Clack, the milliner, from out of Pall-Mall.—But, you seem flurried; there has nothing happened, I hope?

Jen. Happened! that saucy Frenchman has taken such liberties.

Dick. How!—zounds, sir, how dare you——

Tromf. Monsieur Dicky——

Jen. Nay, the fellow is only fit to be laughed at: besides, at present, we want him.—Harkee,

monsieur, if you wish to have your folly forgot, and not be exposed, as you richly deserve, you must immediately lend your assistance.

Tromf. Vid *plaisir.*

Jen. Where can I conceal myself from my angry relations?

Tromf. Dere is but little time for to tink. Ah-ha! I have it. I vill dis instant put you into de *couvent*, vere my sister is nun.

Jen. But they will soon find me out, and force me from them.

Tromf. You must pretend to have de grand inclination to become de bon catolick.

Jen. And will that do?

Tromf. Never fear! mademoiselle *est bien riche;* and de French priest never give up de convert ven she have got great deal of guinée, *jamais.*

Jen. In the mean time, what is become of my friend?

Tromf. De best way for Maister Dicky is to take de little trip to Dunkirk or Boulogne, till matters be settel.

Jen. May I venture, monsieur, to trust myself in your hands?

Tromf. By gar, mademoiselle, dere is more danger from your hand dan from mine.

Jen. We English, monsieur, are an odd sort of people; it is near as dangerous to provoke our women as men.

Tromf. By gar, I believe so. No, no; *l'affair est faite;* I have done.—*Ma femme,* my littel wife shall conduct mademoiselle—La Jeunesse! [*Calls.*

Enter LA JEUNESSE.

La Jeu. Monsieur?

Tromf. Go to my vife; tell her to take mademoiselle to de *couvent,* and leave her dere vid my

sister. After dinner, I vill bring you de news to de grate.

Jen. Well, Dicky, adieu! expect to hear from me soon.

Dick. Be as quick as you will, I shall think it an age. Dearest Jenny, farewell! [*Exit.*

Tromf. Jusqu'à revoir, mademoiselle!

Jen. Servant, Monsieur Tromfort!

[*Exeunt* JENNY *and* LA JEU.

Tromf. Ma foi, mademoiselle be a great littel fool, to prefer Monsieur Dicky to such anoder as me. By gar, de English voman have no judgement at all! she vill repent by-and-by; more pity for she!—La Jeunesse!

Enter LA JEUNESSSE.

Have you sent dose bag of guinea to Dunkirk, to be melt?

La Jeu. Oui, monsieur.

Tromf. Ver well. [*Exit* LA JEUNESSE.]—*Après tout,* Messieurs les Anglois, all de Englis people be ver great fool, to come here, spend dere money, in search after vat dey never will find! to shange dere roasta beef and pudding for our rotten ragout; see de comedy, de play, dey don't comprehend; talk vid de people dey don't understand; *tant mieux!* so much de better! In ver few year, I shut up my hotel, set up my coach, my carosse, and call myself Monsieur de Marquis de Guinea, in compliment to Messieurs les Anglois; ver pritt title, by gar! ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Enter LA JEUNESSE, MR. *and* MRS. MINNIKIN, MRS. CLACK, *and* KIT CODLING.

Mrs. Min. This unnatural hussy, to run thus away from her parents! and into foreign parts, as they say, amongst pagans and papists, and a par-

cel of——and here have we been tossed and tumbled about, that I don't know whether I stand upon my head or my heels.

Min. And then that lantern-jawed hound at the gate, to seize my tobacco-box! and, I'll be sworn, there was not a couple of pipes full.

Mrs. Min. Ay, ay, poor toads! they are glad to get hold of any thing they can get. Well, if I once more set sight of old Powl's, * if ever they get me below bridge again, unless a-pleasuring, perhaps, during the summer, in a hoy, to Margate—pray, son Codling, how long were we in sailing over the sea?

Codl. I can tell you, Madam Minnikin, exact to a minute; because why, I have promised neighbour Index, the printer, to make observations on all the strange things that I see, that he may print them next time, 'long with his Six Weeks Tour to the Continent. Let's see; here is my Journal; [*Reads*] "June the 10th, embarked at seven in the morning at Dover, aboard the Mercury, vind south and by east; nine o'clock, vind weer a little to the vest; shelled half a bushel of peas; eleven o'clock, vind ditto, eat ditto; twelve-and-half, *plucked* a couple of fowls; very odd to see how the vind blew the feathers about; *notá bene*, feathers will swim in the salt sea."

Min. Vast curus observations, indeed!

Mrs. Min. Nay, I always said, son Codling had a good head of his own. Why, Matthew Minnikin, if he goes on but as he begun, I don't know but his'n may be as useful as many of the voyages that have been printed of late.

* Saint Paul's cathedral is meant; its apex was always regarded by the cockneys as a land-mark, which rejoiced their hearts after roaming abroad; the "saint" was omitted by the puritans.

Min. Ay, Margery; if he could but get some strange beasteses, or carry home a foreign savage or two, for a show.

Mrs. Min. But go on, son Codling, I beg!

Codl. "Two o'clock; road beginning to be consumedly rough; was so much jolted, that I could not write any more."

Mrs. Min. Write! I'm sure I was not able to stand; so they popped me into a hole in the wall; I think they called it a *cabin;* Lord bless us! 'twas more like a coffin!

Clack. The sea has been rather rumbustious, I own; but then, sister, the land makes us ample amends.

Mrs. Min. Amends! in what way?

Clack. Bless me, sister, how can you ask? I profess, I feel myself quite a different [kind of] person: the people here are all so gay and well-bred! Did not you observe, when I accidentally sneezed, how politely all the people pulled off their hats?

Mrs. Min. Pshaw! what signifies their grins and grimaces, their scrapes and congees? Do you, sister, seriously think that the French folks are more cleverer than we?

Clack. Ridiculous! is there a mortal can doubt it? Why, without their assistance, how should we be able to dress ourselves, or our victuals? And then, as to cleverness, did you observe those little children, as we came up from the key?

Mrs. Min. Yes; and, to my thinking, I never saw such a parcel of brown brats in my life.

Clack. I declare, I was ashamed; quite blushed for my country, to hear mere infants, quite babies, as I may say, sputter French more freer and glibber than your daughter Jane, who has had a French master these five years.

Mrs. Min. That's true, I must own; but then I don't find that they be more cuter to get our lingo than we to learn theirs.

Clack. Because why, they think it beneath them.

Mrs. Min. Who the deuce be all these?

Enter several PORTERS, *with small Parcels.*

La Jeu. De porter from de Custom-house, along vid your baggage.

Codl. Baggage! zooks, any one of these might have carried it all.

Clack. Ay! there, there, brother, you have another proof of their breeding; all of them eager to be useful to strangers.

Min. Yes, pox take them! in hopes, I suppose, of being handsomely paid.—Well, monsieurs, how much are you to have?

Clack. Fy, Mr. Minnikin! don't expose your meanness the moment you are landed.—Monsieur, you will satisfy these gentlemen for the trouble they have taken. And, Mr. Codling, do try and get us a good room, if you can.

La Jeu. Venez ici!

[*Exeunt* PORTERS, *bowing and scraping.*

Min. Hey-day! who the deuce have we here?

Mrs. Min. As I live, a couple of shoe-blacks, with muffs and bag-wigs!

Enter SHOE-BLACKS, *who bow with great Ceremony, and take Snuff.*

Min. There, there, Margery! dost thou see? mark their smirking, bowing, and sneezing!

Clack. Ay, sister Minnikin, there! you see how courteous and civil the very lowest people are here. Show me a shopkeeper, in your whole ward, that can do his honours so well. See how politely they offer their snuff to each other; and look! if the

sweet little creatures are not *set* down to cards on their stools!

Min. Yes, yes; I see well enough.

Clack. Not like our vulgar fellows, at put or all-fours, but a party at piquet, I'll be sworn!

Enter LA JEUNESSE, LUKE LAPPELLE, *and* GREGORY GINGHAM.

La Jeu. Dis way, my lor! one, two, dree step; take care a, my lor!

Mrs. Min. Bless me, my dear, if here a'n't Mr. Lappelle, from Bond-street! and neighbour Gingham, as sure as a gun! fresh from Paris, I warrant.

Min. Well met, neighbour Gingham! What, you've been fetching home fashions, I reckon.

Ging. Hush, Master Minnikin! there is no need to make proclamation in foreign parts of what business we be.

Clack. Brother Minnikin's tongue will, now and then, run too fast for his wit.

Min. Nay, I said nothing, I am sure.

Lap. *Excusé moi*, Monsieur Minnikin! you mentioned fetching of fashions; and that, as the French say, was *tantaramount* to calling us tailors.

Clack. The very same thing.

Min. Why, sure, Gregory Gingham, thee be'st not ashamed of thy calling, be'st?

Ging. That is another man's matter, you knows. How is it our fault, (d'ye mind me?) if the French folks will take us for lords? They saw something in us that was above the vulgar, I reckon.

Mrs. Min. Nay, for the matter of that, Matthew, it is, at worst, but being quit with mounseer; for, I'll be sworn, there are many of their counts and marquises that comes over to us, (aye, and are received by the best quality, too, at their tables,)

who, if the truth was known, are little better than tailors at home.

Codl. Right! well said, Madam Minnikin! With this odds in their favour, (plague take 'em!) that them there fellows make a good hand and profit by their pride and presumption; whilst our foolish folks are forced to pay pretty high fees for their titles. I reckon, your *lordships* were swimmingly soused on the road.

Ging. To say truth, the bills did mount pretty high, and we did not choose to chaffer with them; because why, we wa'n't willing to bring a disgrace on our dignity.

Clack. Wisely done, for the honour of England!

Min. Honour! I can't say that ever I heard that Old England received much honour from tailors; unless, indeed, when they listed in Elliot's light-horse.

Lap. That may be the case, Master Minnikin, with those of the trade who live in the city; but I would have you to know, the knights of the needle are another sort of people at our end of the town.

Clack. Doubtless.

Lap. It is not in the fashions only that we take the lead; we rule, likewise, over the *belles lettres*, as the French call them.

Min. How!

Lap. Give laws to the drama; damn a play when we please; or hiss an actor off the stage, when we take a dislike to the rascal.

Codl. Ay! it is the first time I ever heard of a tailor's goose hissing!

Lap. Yes, yes; why, I myself, at the head of my journeymen, have more than once played the part of THE PUBLIC.

Min. You surprise me.

Lap. And am known, at all our houses of call, by the name of *Tom Town.*

Clack. Mr. Lappelle, you are but losing your labour: honest, good sort of people enough; but mere cits; quite ignorant of what is going on in the world!

Lap. Yes, yes, they look of that cut; not of the right stuff, as the French say, to make *bucks desprits* on.

Clack. And, pray, what news is stirring in Paris?

Lap. Tojours gay, as the French say, Mrs. Clack.

Mrs. Min. I reckon, there be powers of our country folks there.

Lap. I suppose so; for I saw a good many awkward people, as they say, *à la comedy,* and at the *Colossus;* but I chose to avoid them.

Mrs. Min. And why so?

Codl. I reckon, there were some of his masters amongst them; and it would not have been decent to be too forward for a tradesman like he.

Lap. Pardonnez-moi! that was not it; it is always the rule with me, when I travels, to avoid *les Anglois,* as the French say, the English, as much as I can.

Codl. I reckon, the French, as they don't know his trade, are more politer and civil.

Lap. No; there's a roughness, a *bourgoisy,* about our barbarians, that is not at all to my taste; not a bit, as the French say, to my *gout.*

Clack. I don't wonder at it. I hope you left the royal family all in good health.

Lap. Yes; Mr. *le Roi,* as the French say, looked pretty jolly; and I was at his grand *couvert* and *cowshee* a-Sunday: his Majesty looked at me very hard.

Clack. Indeed!

Mrs. Min. Ay; wondering I suppose, how such an one as he could contrive to get in.

Lap. This relation of yours, Mrs. Clack, is but a low kind of a body.—No, no, Mrs. Minnikin; his Majesty and I have been acquainted; many a time and oft have I been at court, when he was only the *dolphin*.

Clack. Pray, how long, Mr. Lappelle, was you coming from Paris?

Lap. Two days and a night.

Clack. Are the accommodations good upon the road?

Lap. Their horses, their *chevauxes*, as the French call them, are not quite so nimble as our'n; but, then, to make amends, like the French, I *courier* the post, without stopping; unless, perhaps, to take a slight *repas* of a bit of *jambun*, or a *hamlet*.

Min. But how do you like your jaunt, neighbour Gingham? You are rather silent, I think.

Lap. This, you know, is only Gingham's first trip; besides, to like Paris, a man must *parle vouz* in perfection; speak their lingor perfectly well.

Ging. For the matter of that, Master Lappelle, the postilions did not seem to take very readily all that you said on the road.

Lap. There there follows! how should they? mere country bumpkins! little better, as we say in French, than a parcel of *pheasants!*

Clack. Ay, hogs, I suppose, like our own.

Lap. True, Mrs. Clack; quite *cowchans*, as we say.

Mrs. Min. Have they pretty good victuals in these parts, neighbour Gingham?

Ging. Victuals! soup, that tasted as if wrung from a dish-clout, and rags stewed in vinegar, are all the victuals I have seen.

Lap. Ah! poor Gingham has a true English stomach; nothing will do but substantials; he has no taste for *ragoutes, intermeats,* and *ratis.*

Ging. Nay, you know, at the last town, my wife fished out a large piece of blue apron, upon the top of her fork.

Mrs. Min. What! did Mrs. Gingham come with you?

Ging. Yes; and is about as well pleased as myself.

Mrs. Min. Where is she?

Ging. In a room hard-by, with Mrs. Lappelle.

Lap. How often have I cautioned you not to give her that name here in France? Suppose any of the people should hear you?

Clack. What, then, I suppose it is not Mrs. Lappelle, that is your real wife, that is with you?

Lap. Yes, yes; but you know nothing can be so vulgar in France as voyaging about with one's wife; so I make her pass for my mistress, and always calls her *mademoiselle.*

Clack. And she fares never the worse, I'll be sworn.

Lap. Au contraire, as they say; besides, it is the oniest method to keep her to one's self.

Mrs. Min. How so?

Lap. No Frenchman scruples to make love to a wife; because why, 'tis not the fashion for the husband to care a farthing about her; but to seduce a man's mistress, that he is imagined to love, is a crime that is never forgiven.

Clack. Lord, Mr. Lappelle, we are like the French in a great many things.

Lap. Yes, we endeavour; and, to say truth, improve every day in our morals.

Clack. But mayn't we join the ladies within?

Lap. By all means;—but mind the caution I gave.—Yes, mademoiselle, and I, by accident, picked up Gingham and wife. We met them in the Fauxbourg of St. Germain; and, as we were to set out about the same time, we thought it would be, as the French say, for us four to come to Calais together, an agreeable *tête-à-tête* on the road.

Clack. Well, I should like vastly to see Paris before my return; but the journey is so very expensive; cost a world of money, no doubt.

Lap. Why, as I know how to manage, not altogether so much. It is true, we paid our bills like lords on the road; but it shall go hard, Mrs. Clack, if I don't make the real lords refund, when I send in their bills.

Clack. All the reason in life.

Lap. This, with a good cargo of lace conveyed by mademoiselle, and some rich suits that I know how to smuggle safely to Dover, will, I should think, carry me scot-free to Bond-street;—but, pray, what brings all your family?

Clack. We will inform you within.

Lap. Gingham, you will escort Mrs. Minnikin. Mrs. Clack, as the French say, will you accept of my *brass!* [*Exeunt, with ceremony.*

ACT THE SECOND.

A French Apartment.

Enter MR. *and* MRS. MINNIKIN *and* MRS. CLACK.

Mrs. Min. I tell you, Matthew, it is all a purtence, merely to keep out of our hands. Why, what should she do in a convent?

Min. Mayhap, Margery, she may take it in her head to turn nun.

Mrs. Min. Lord, Matthew, how can'st think of any such a thing? She, nun! no, no; she's more likely, by half, to bring people into the world, than to take any one out on't. Wha' say you, sister Clack?

Clack. I am pretty much of your mind, I must confess; but we shall know more of the matter when Kit Codling comes back.

Min. D'ye think they'll permit'n to see her?

Mrs. Min. That, I suppose, will depend on herself. Oh, here comes Mr. Codling.

Enter CODLING.

Well, son, what news from the runagate? Have you seen her?

Codl. Not I: they first showed me up to a room with iron rails at one end, like a begging-grate; and, upon ringing the bell, there popped out of t'other side the bars, an old gentlewoman, drest in a blanket, with a black handkerchief over her head.

Mrs. Min. Yes, I have heard the Papishes have such dresses amongst them: who was she?

Codl. I took her to be one of the clargywomen that belong to the place. I asked, if they had veigled one Miss Minnikin into their clutches, in hopes to make her a Papish. At the word *veigled*, the old woman turned up the whites of her eyes, and, with her hands 'cross her stomach, like a child that is saying her catechise, made a jaculation, I fancy, in the outlandish tongue; upon which, I told her to let me have none on her hypocrisy canting, but to answer direct to my questions.

Clack. How rude! It was lucky she did not understand you.

Codl. Understand me! yes, as well as you do. Pho, mun, they be all Englishwomen that be locked up in that church. She owned that Miss Jenny was there.

Mrs. Min. She did!

Codl. Then I asked if I could not change a few words with her, by way of a little discourse; they said no, because why, miss was out of order at present.

Min. A pretence; nothing else.

Codl. So I reckon. Then I desired the gentlewoman to open the hatch, and let me in doors to see her, for I had a word or two for her private ear from her parents; upon that, the old gossip set up such a grumbling, called me profligate harrytie, and wondered I could be so empiety to think they ever suffered a man to enter their doors; 'pon that, I told her, that if none of her complishes were more handsome than she, ecod, they might open their doors without any great danger; ha, ha! this made the old one as mad as the deuce.

Clack. I tould you what would happen, if you sent such a rough creature as he.

Codl. No; we grew more milder at last, and she offered to show her, if her father and mother would come.

Mrs. Min. Then, Matthew, let us go to her this instant. Son Codling will show us the way.

Codl. For the matter of that, I don't believe you will speed much better than me.

Clack. And why not?

Codl. When I asked her, if as how she thought Jenny had serusly a mind to turn to their way, she said she didn't make the least doubt on't; for that

miss had all the true outward and visible signs of an inward vocation.

Mrs. Min. Who have we here?

Enter FATHER O'DONNOVAN, *a Capuchin.*

Codl. I don't know; a mountebank, I reckon; or, mayhap, a man that shows sleight of hand.

O'Don. Save you, good jantlemen.

Mrs. Min. No, no; it is an Englishman, I know by his tongue.—Well, friend, who and what are you?

O'Don. Plaise you, I am a poor Capuchin, that belongs to this convent here in the town.

Codl. Capuchin! And pray, honest friend, what trade is that in the French?

O'Don. Trade! the divil a bit of a trade that it is. By my shoul, if I had a mind to be of a trade, do you think I would have quitted my haymaking in England?

Mrs. Min. What is it, then, that you follow?

O'Don. It is a kind of profession, my dear.

Mrs. Min. A profession!

O'Don. Ay; we makes professions of poverty, that we may be sure to want for nothing as long as we live.

Codl. And how do you get what you want?

O'Don. By asking it from those that can give it.

Codl. Godso! then you are a beggar, I fancy.

O'Don. Who! a beggar! what the divil put that in your head?

Mrs. Min. What d'ye call yourself else?

O'Don. I am only a mendicant, honey.

Codl. I wonders you prefer so idle a life.

O'Don. And why so? d'ye think that I would not rather that other people should work for me than work for myself? not that I should mind

working neither, but only becaase it is so very laborious.

Mrs. Min. And are folks, now, very charitable in this here part of the world?

O'Don. Charitable! the devil of any charity's in it: it is, honey, a Christian kind of a bargain, struck up among us, I think.

Clack. A bargain!

O'Don. Ay; whilst they work for us, we pray for them; they take care of our bodies, and in return, my dear, we take care of their shouls.

Codl. Souls! never stir, father, if this ben't one of their friars.

Mrs. Min. Sure as can be, son Codling has hit it. Who can tell, husband, as he is our countryman, and one of the gang, but, for a little spill of money, he may put us in a way to get our daughter out of their clutches?

Min. It is but trying, however.

Mrs. Min. And pray, good sir, by what name may we call you?

O'Don. Father O'Donnovan, at your humble sarvice.

Mrs. Min. Will you do us the favour to step a little this way?—Son Codling, have a look out, that we ben't interrupted.—Why, you must know, that a daughter of ours has run away from her friends, and, voluns noluns, taken shelter here in a cloister.

O'Don. Run away from her friends! by my shoul, that was very foolishly done.

Mrs. Min. Now, if you could put us in a way, by hook or by crook, to get her out of the convent——

O'Don. Me! what me! to get a parson out of a convent!

Mrs. Min. If you would be so kind to assist——

O'Don. Fy! consider, woman, what you are asking.

Min. Nay, sir!

O'Don. Upon my conscience, here is one of the most blackest conspiracies broke out against popery since the gunpowder-treason.

Mrs. Min. Patience, sweet sir!

O'Don. To tempt one of my order to be guilty of sacredness!

Mrs. Min. Indeed, good sir, I had no such thing in my head.

O'Don. Pace, woman! what is it better than sacredness, to break into a convent, and take any cratur out by compulsion?

Mrs. Min. But, sir——

O'Don. I tell you, even to force a young woman from thence that is willing to lave it, is one of the biggest robberies that can be committed.

Mrs. Min. My dear——

O'Don. And, to extenuate the matter, here is a dutiful, poor young body, that flies from her parents, and takes refuge in the arms of the church—

Mrs. Min. Hear me a word, reverend sir.

O'Don. We shall see what the Commandant will say to this business. Take my word for it, my friends, you will be all saazed in an instant, and locked up in prison aboard the gallies for the rest of your lives.

Mrs. Min. Mercy on us!—sister Clack, try if you can't mollify his choler a little, or we shall be clapped up in the 'quisition directly.

Clack. Can you, reverend sir, be so cruel to your country-folks here——

O'Don. Pace, woman!

Clack. Indeed, they had no bad intentions; they only wanted to ask your reverence's advice, and meant to leave a small sum in your hands——

O'Don. Sum! do you main to insult me? don't you know, woman, that we must never touch money?

Clack. To bestow upon poor objects that want it; but, if so be your reverence is forbidden to touch it, why, to be sure, we wo'n't dare to——

O'Don. Why, lookee, mistress; to handle money is against the rules of our order, which we dare not break through. If, indeed, it was put into a purse, why, there would be no occasion, d'ye see, for me to touch it.

Clack. Brother Minnikin, have you ever a purse?

Mrs. Min. Here, here is mine, sister Clack.

O'Don. Why, as you saam to be well-disposed people, and only want a little wholesome advice; why that, d'ye see, may alter the case.

Mrs. Min. Nothing else, indeed, reverend sir.

O'Don. Why, d'ye mind me, it would not be dacent for me to stir in this matter; becaase why, as we are monks, you know, it is our duty to bring over and pervert as many shouls as we can.

Mrs. Min. True, reverend sir; but there is nothing of that in the matter; the girl, Heaven knows, has no more mind to be preverted than any of us.

O'Don. How! more shame for her! but may I belave you?

Mrs. Min. All a pretence, nothing else; she is run away with an idle 'prentice of ours, to avoid marrying that young man there before you.

O'Don. Have you brought with you no letters of recommendation to any strangers of your acquaintance that live in this town.

Mrs. Min. We know no mortal; we have not been landed an hour.

O'Don. Becaase, a little interest in this case would go a great way; not but there are some of our own country folks that live here in great credit; perhaps, you may have known them at home.

Mrs. Min. Does your reverence remember their names?

O'Don. There is Mr. Mac-Rappum, that lives in the square, one of the best natured craturs alive; he got the jail-distemper by attending his own trial at the Old Bailey.

Mrs. Min. Poor gentleman!

O'Don. So the judge advised him to try, for seven years, the air of America.

Mrs. Min. And did he reap any benefit?

O'Don. He has put off the jaunt for awhile.

Mrs. Min. Why so?

O'Don. I don't know; they talk that that place is all in combustion at present; so, being a peaceable man, he chose to be set down here in his way.

Mrs Min. Dost know him, Matthew?

Min Not I.

O'Don. Then, there is one 'Squire Copywell, that is but lately come over; a very fasatious humoursome man; he laid a bet with a friend of his, out of fun, that he would draw a bill in the handwriting of Sir Timothy Tradewell, so like, that the banker should pay it without hesitation.

Mrs. Min. And did he?

O'Don. You may say that; but when they come to find out the mistake, the banker, being a crusty, dull fellow, and not understanding a joke, talked of going to law with the 'squire.

Mrs. Min. Lord bless us! how could they—

O'Don. Nay, I don't know, my shoul; them

there English have some strange maxims amongst them; so the 'squire not caring to throw away his money to lawyers, chose to come and live here, rather than make any more words of the matter.

Clack. I'd have done the very same thing, had I been the 'squire.

O'Don. Nay, for the matter of that, you have no more manners than morality among you in England.

Mrs. Min. How, reverend sir! I thought we was remarkable for——

O'Don. Pace, woman, and hold your pallaver! Was there ever such ill-breeding as Lord Constant's to Sir Henry Hornbeam, that lives hard by here at Ardres?

Clack. Indeed! I never heard nothing about it.

O'Don. My lord was obligated to go about his affairs into the North for a month, and left his disconsolate lady behind him in London.

Mrs. Min. Poor gentlewoman!

O'Don. Upon which his friend, Sir Henry, used to go and stay there all the day, to amuse and divert her.

Mrs. Min. How good natured that was in Sir Henry!

O'Don. Nay, he carried his friendship much farther than that: for my lady, as there was many highwaymen and footpads about, was afraid that some of them would break into the house, and so desired Sir Henry to lie there every night.

Mrs. Min. Good soul! and he did, I dare say.

O'Don. To be sure; there is not a more politer man in the world. So, hearing in the middle of the night a little noise below stairs, he runned down to see what was the matter; finding all safe,

in coming up again, he chanced to make a little mistake.

Mrs. Min. How so?

O'Don. Instead of going to his own bed, he stepped into my lady's.

Clack. That might happen very well in the dark.

O'Don. And there falling asleep, never once found out his mistake till the maid came up in the morning.

Clack. He must have been vastly surprized, to be sure.

Mrs. Min. And, I warrant me, so was my lady.

O'Don. Without doubt. But now comes the upshot of all: I reckon, you suppose my lord thought himself much obliged to Sir Henry.

Clack. To be sure.

O'Don. Not he; by my shoul! nay, more worser than that, he had the ill-manners to bring an action against him.

Clack. What, after Sir Harry had told him the story?

O'Don. Ay, and my lady, likewise; so it must be true, as you know, becaase why, they could not both be mistaken.

Clack. There was no danger of that.

O'Don. So, Sir Harry, not choosing to live any longer amongst such under-bred people, has settled here for his life.

Clack. Why, as there is so much good company, it must be vast agreeable living here, I should think.

O'Don. You may say that: and, indeed, this place is so pleasant, that every day one ingenus parson or other comes over to live. Upon my shoul, among ourselves, I belave the folks on your side the water begin to grow a little jealous.

Clack. No wonder.

O'Don. Insomuch, that they have made application to the magistrates here to send some of them forcibly back.

Mrs. Min. But, I dare say, the French were more politer than that.

O'Don. To be sure. Indeed, out of compassion, they have compelled three or four that were poor to return; becaase why, it couldn't be very agreeable to them, you know, to live here without money.

Mrs. Min. To be sure.

O'Don. And, then, the English are indulged in the free exercise of their religion.

Mrs. Min. Oh, then they go to church?

O'Don. No, no; if they find 'em preaching or praying, they hang up the minister, and send the congregation all to the gallies.

Mrs. Min. Dost hear that, Matthew Minnikin?

O'Don. So now, as I was a-telling, if you can get any friend to speak to the——*Boo-boo-boo!* upon my shoul, I had like to have forgot the most materialist parson of all: does any of you know Lady Kitty Crocodile?

Clack. Lady Kitty! nobody better; I have had the honour of working for her ladyship this many years.

O'Don. Then your business will be done in a trice. Between ourselves, the ladies always rule the roast in this part of the world.

Clack. I dare believe her ladyship will be very willing to serve us.

O'Don. I don't doubt it at all; she is one of the most worthiest women alive. She could't bear to stay in England after the death of her husband; every thing there put her so much in mind of her loss. Why, if she met by accident with one of his

boots, it always set her a-crying; indeed, the poor gentlewoman was a perfect Niobe.

Clack. Indeed, I found her ladyship in a very incontionable way, when I waited on her upon the mournful occasion. Indeed, she was rather more cheerful when she tried on her weeds; and, no wonder, for it is a dress vastly becoming, especially to people inclined to be fat. But I was in hopes, by this time, she had got over her griefs.

O'Don. Not at all, indeed; indeed, with the French she is fasatious and pleasant enough; but she no sooner sets sight on any thing English, than the tears burst out like a whirlwind.

Clack. Then, if we can do without it, we wo'n't trouble her ladyship.

Mrs. Min. True; we will first try, sister, what we can do at the convent.

O'Don. By all means: and d'ye hear, you need not mention any thing about the purse: you understand me?

Clack. Oh, father, you need not fear us.

O'Don. Nay, it is not for that; but becaase ones charity, you know, should be private; and, therefore, to divulge it would take away most of the merit. [*Exit.*

Clack. True, true. What's next to be done?

Mrs. Min. Why, we had best go after the wench to the convent.

Clack. But take care what you say: you see what a hobble we had like to have got into.

Mrs. Min. Never you fear; I warrant, I knows how to behave myself. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—A Convent.

Enter ABBESS *and* JENNY.

Abbess. Only, daughter, consider to what temptations you are exposed in the world.

Jen. The more merit, mother, then, in me to resist them.

Abbess. Attacked by enemies from every quarter.

Jen. I am a girl of spirit, mother, and am determined to face them.

Abbess. But they will be too powerful, child, for you to resist.

Jen. Then, like abler officers, I must surrender. I suppose there will be no danger of their refusing me quarter.

Abbess. Daughter, daughter, I am afraid your affections are carnal.

Jen. Mother, mother, they are like other girls of my age.

Abbess. Why won't you accept a spiritual spouse?

Jen. Because I have found one of flesh and blood much more to my mind.

Abbess. Consider, that is an union that will continue for ever.

Jen. And do you call that a recommendation, good mother?

Abbess. The other, child, must be finally dissolved by death.

Jen. Like many of my countrywomen, perhaps, I mayn't have patience to tarry altogether so long. But come, mother; I can, I believe, give a good guess at your meaning: you have a notion, that I should bring a pretty good fortune to this spouse of your recommendation?

Abbess. True, daughter.

Jen. To which, as I never heard of any children produced by this unaccountable union, you will succeed? Now I must tell you, I ha'n't a farthing of fortune.

Abbess. Daughter!

Jen. I am entirely dependent upon father, who, I am positively sure, wo'n't part with a farthing to you. He give any thing to your church, as you call it! why, he's never so happy as when he can rob our own vicar at home of his dues.

Abbess. What, daughter, have you no separate portion?

Jen. Not a doit.

Abbess. And your father so fixed an heretic as you have described him?

Jen. Hates a Papish worser than poison.

Abbess. Well, child, as I find you have no immediate call to the veil, I shall, at this time, press it no further. Your best way, will, I think, be to return to your father.

Jen. Not quite so soon, if you please. I have told you what induced me to leave him; now, if you will screen me from his pursuit, till I can otherwise dispose of myself, though I am not rich, I have a few guineas here that will thank you.

Abbess. Why, as the compelling a daughter to marry is a profanation of one of our sacraments, I am bound in duty, if I can, to prevent it.

Jen. Is it? gad, I like that part of your creed well enough.

Enter a NUN.

Nun. The father and mother of that amiable child are now at the grate.

Jen. Lord, good mother, what shall I do?

Abbess. Let them know she shall attend them directly. [*Exit* NUN.

Jen. How, mother!

Abbess. Fear nothing: if they insist on the taking you hence, urge an affection you feel for

our faith, and that you wish to wait here for our ghostly instructions; in such a case, this is a secure sanctuary from the secular arm.

Jen. I understand you, good mother. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—The Grate.

Enter MR. *and* MRS. MINNIKIN, MRS. CLACK, *and* CODLING.

Min. This jade is the plague of our lives!

Mrs. Min. Peace, Matthew! by rough means we shall gain nothing, I am sure; let us try what a little mollification will do. Son Codling, keep out of sight, if you please.

Enter the ABBESS *and* JENNY.

Abbess. This, I presume, is the person you want.

Mrs. Min. Yes, mistress, this is the party indeed.—So, Jenny, how could you be so naughty, child, to run away from your father and me?

Min. Yes, and to consort with a parcel of Pap——

Mrs. Min. Peace, Matthew! there be good and bad of all sorts, as they say.

Min. True; and, I warrant her, she'll make choice of the worst.

Mrs. Min. Well, but come, Matthew, it is never too late to repent.

Clack. True, sister; and, I dare say, my niece is ready to return back with us, and will do every thing we can desire her.

Jen. I am sensible of the respect and duty I owe to my parents——

Mrs. Min. Very well said, child! It is a long lane that has no turning.

Jen. And shall always be ready to obey their commands.

Min. Do you hear, mistress? then open the doors, and let her come out.

Jen. Pardon me, sir; that cannot be.

Min. Why not?

Jen. Because a much more important duty detains me.

Min. And pray, what pretty duty may that be?

Jen. This pious and reverend lady will tell you.

Min. Come, mistress, let us have it, then.

Abbess. Your daughter, son, by a miraculous operation, has had her eyes opened to the perilous paths in which she was straying.

Min. Yes, yes, she has wandered long enough, to be sure.

Abbess. And has begged our advice to direct her in the right road.

Min. And, if she takes it, it will be the first time in her life.

Abbess. Say not so, son; you are too rash in your judgement.

Min. To come to the proof, will she marry the young man we have provided?

Abbess. She has provided a better match for herself.

Min. The devil she has! what! a 'prentice-boy, that wants two years to be out of his time?

Abbess. Son, I don't comprehend you.

Min. Dick Drugget, I mean; as arrant a scape-grace——

Abbess. Son, I know no such person as Drugget.

Min. What, he has changed his name, I suppose, since he came over. Like enough!

Abbess. Son, we err, I believe, as to the person:—the spouse, your daughter, wishes to wed is Saint Francis.

Min. Saint Francis! who the devil is he? what! has she picked up a Frenchman already? like enough. But if that be the case, mistress, you may give my service to Mr. Saint Francis, and tell him he shall never touch a single penny of mine as long as he lives.

Abbess. Saint Francis stands in need of no fortune.

Min. He is so rich! So much the better for he. And you may, over and above, tell him, notwithstanding she looks so demure, that he could not have met with such a headstrong, obstinate, peremptory vixen if he had searched all the country round.

Abbess. Saint Francis will, notwithstanding, cherish the dear child in his bosom.

Min. Will he? then, if the dear child don't kick his guts out in less than a month, she is confoundedly altered! But come, mistress; mayhap, we may find friends here, although we be strangers: we'll see if there be no laws against kidnapping other folks' children away.

Abbess. You grow indecent, son; we must leave you.

Min. In England, now I would have horpurscorpus'd her out of your hands in an hour!

Abbess. Daughter, pay your reverence to your relations! [JENNY *curtsies, and retires from the Grate, with the* ABBESS.

Min. A hypocritical slut! And, harkee, mistress! before I goes, I will tell you a bit of my mind: notwithstanding your whining and canting, and sanctified looks, I don't think you are a bit

better than you should be, d'ye see me; and, if the truth was known, you are little better, I believe, than an old match-making bawd!

Mrs. Min. Matthew, consider where you are! have a care what you say.

Min. Prithee, woman, be quiet! Losers have leave to speak in all countries, I hope.

Mrs. Min. And of what use is your speaking?

Clack. True, sister. But, come, let us go to Lady Kitty, as the friar advised us; perhaps, she may put us in a way.

Mrs. Min. Right, sister. Come, Matthew, there is no time to be lost.

Min. Lost! we had better leave her to her own wicked ways: she will find that punishment enough in the end.

Mrs. Min. But she is our daughter, Matthew, you know; let us do our duty, however.

Min. Well, well! Come, son Codling! [*Exeunt.*

Codl. I'll follow you, father, when I have made an observation or two, to put into neighbour Index's Tower.—"The clargywomen, in these parts don't use any linen; and, instead of doing like our'n, they wear their woollen smocks over the rest of their clothes. *Nota bene*, if they can catch any young women into their clutches, they locks them up in dens, like wild beastesses that are kept in the Tower." [*Exit.*

SCENE.—An Hotel.

Enter MISS LYDELL *and* HETTY.

Miss L. Sure, never was so capricious a being!

Het. Not of the same mind two minutes together? I am astonished, miss, how you are able to bear it.

Miss L. I only wait for a fair occasion to quit

her ladyship; such an one, I mean, as would justify me to my friends.

Het. For that, miss, you cannot be long at a loss.

Miss L. Ah, Hetty, it is impossible for you to guess at the half of her art. My relations, seduced by her frequent professions, trusted me to her care, expecting what, I am satisfied, never will happen, a permanent establishment for me by means of her favour.

Het. Why, sure, miss, she can't, for shame, but do something handsome for you, after having dragged you in her train, as I may say, almost over the world.

Miss L. There, Hetty, is the source of her present behaviour. She knows what she has promised, and wants to force me to some indiscreet act of impatience, as an apology for the breach of her faith.

Het. Ay! is she so cunning as that?

Miss L. For, at the same time that she is teazing, torturing, and loading me with every mortification in private, you see with what particular regard and attention she affects to treat me in public.

Het. True enough, I must own, miss; exactly like her pretended grief for Sir John: she howls and cries over the poor boot, for all the world like the strange creature I have read of.

Miss L. Hush, Hetty! she is here.

Enter LADY KITTY CROCODILE.

L. Kitty. In close committee, I see! What mischief are you two brewing together?—I am astonished, Miss Lydell, at your seducing my servants; is this a proper return, miss, for all the obligations you owe me?

Miss L. I am sorry your ladyship should think me capable——

L. Kitty. Capable! — Leave the room, with your inquisitive impertinent face! You want some tale to run tattling with to the rest of the crew. [*To* HETTY.

Het. Crew! I don't understand what your ladyship means by the *crew;* though we are servants, we may be as good Christians as other people, I hope; and though, to be sure——

L. Kitty. Hold your insolent tongue, and quit the room when I bid you!

Het. Crew!—With all my heart; I have no objection to quitting the room, nor the house neither, for the matter of that. *Crew!* indeed; marry come up. [*Exit.*

L. Kitty. So, miss, these are the fruits of your little hypocritical plots: these lessons have been taught them by you.

Miss L. Me, madam! Can your ladyship suppose that I would descend so low as to——

L. Kitty. Descend, miss! I don't understand you: pray, in what respect are you so much better than they? Is it because I have permitted you to sit at my table, that you give yourself these airs of importance? Though your father was parson of the parish, yet, I hope I was not obliged, at his death, to provide for all his beggarly tribe.

Miss L. Madam, I never presumed——

L. Kitty. And yet, has not my generosity been extended to every branch? There was your mother; did not I, by my own single interest, get her into the Alms-house, at Bromley; where, except meat, drink, and clothes, she is amply provided with every thing a woman of her condition can want?

Miss L. I never denied——

L. Kitty. Was not your brother Tom, miss, made a guinea-pig upon my recommendation?

Miss L. Granted, madam.

L. Kitty. And, as to you, did not I, for no reason that I know, unless, indeed, that you are a distant relation, take you into my house, put you above my own woman, and make you one of my maids of honour at once?

Miss L. I hope, madam, I have not proved ungrateful.

L. Kitty. No, miss! How often have I caught you ogling, and throwing out lures to Sir John, in his life-time?

Miss L. I hope, madam, Sir John never charged me with any designs of that nature.

L. Kitty. No; there was your security, miss; you knew he was too generous and good to expose your infamous arts; but you could not conceal them from me!

Miss L. Nay, for Heaven's sake, madam—

L. Kitty. In Italy, too, there was Prince Pincoffi and Cardinal Grimsky; you could not help throwing out your traps to ensnare them.

Miss L. Me, madam!

L. Kitty. Yes, you; what else, at my assemblies, could make them prefer your conversation to mine? I hope you have not the impudence to suppose that your person and figure would bear any comparison.

Miss L. Madam, I never presumed——

L. Kitty. Besides, miss, you know I never durst carry you with me to any conference I had with the Pope, for fear you should be trying some of your coquetish airs upon him.

Miss L. Mercy upon me!

L. Kitty. And here, too, Colonel Crosby, the only decent man in the town, when I was in Ca-

lais before, never missed my toilet a morning; but now, when he comes, wo'n't tarry a moment, unless, indeed, when you are in waiting.

Miss L. I am so confused at the strange charges your ladyship brings, that I protest I don't know what answer to make.

L. Kitty. I do really believe you. But you see, miss, all your little contrivances are fully discovered; and I should tell you, Miss Lydell, that you are the most artificial, cunning, hypocritical, mischievous minx that ever I met with, but my humanity and my good breeding prevents me: a woman of quality should never lose sight of her station.

Miss L. Were I capable of but half the crimes your ladyship lays to my charge, I should detest myself full as much as your ladyship hates me. But I cannot wish, madam, that your ladyship should keep about your person a young creature to whom you have been pleased to take such an aversion: send me, therefore, madam, to my poor mother; her age and infirmities must want my assistance.

L. Kitty. Who hinders you, miss? You may go when you please.

Miss L. Your ladyship will send with me some person of confidence; or, at least, a line to my mother, intimating, that I have neither dishonoured myself, or deserted your ladyship.

L. Kitty. So! here is another stroke of your art! You want to persuade people that, through caprice, grown tired of your company, I have the cruelty to throw you at once upon the wide world: no, miss! that wo'n't do; you should be a little more careful to cover the hook.

Enter a SERVANT *and* COLONEL CROSBY.

Serv. Colonel Crosby. [*Exit.*

Col. I hope I am not an intruder! — Bless me, what has happened? Miss Lydell in tears!

L. Kitty. Yes; the poor child has just received a letter from her mother, one of the best kind of women that ever was: dry up your tears, Lydia, my love!—You sullen, sulking, stomachful slut!—Poor Mrs. Lydell has but very bad health, Colonel Crosby; and the dear girl, who is, indeed, a most affectionate, dutiful daughter—Go up to your room, you pouting, perverse, little vixen—You see colonel! but be comforted, Lydy, my dear! although you should lose your mother, you may be certain of finding a mother in me.

Col. I hope, miss, there is no immediate imminent danger?

L. Kitty. The poor child's tender nature and amiable heart makes her dread the worst that can happen.—What, is the wench petrified? move off, and don't stand sniveling here!—She wishes, colonel, to withdraw to her chamber: but don't brood over your sorrows, my love! order my coach, and take a little airing, my dear!—I hope it will overturn, and break every bone in your skin. [*Exit* LYDIA.

Col. How amiable in your ladyship is this attention for so deserving an object!

L. Kitty. I am afraid, colonel, you will think it a weakness. Excess of humanity is my foible, I know; but a generous mind, such as yours, colonel, will pardon the error.

Col. Error! it is the glory, the pride of your sex; it is the invincible Ægis of Pallas, that must subdue every heart it attacks!

L. Kitty. Sorrow naturally softens the mind; and, Heaven knows, I have had a plentiful por-

tion. The dear man, whose resemblance I wear on my wrist——

Col. For Heaven's sake, madam——

L. Kitty. And for ever will wear.—But what necessity for this idle delusion? Is not thy sweet image deeply graved in my heart?

Col. Indeed, your ladyship should not give way to these transports; they may endanger your health.

L. Kitty. Look here! Can I then lament him too much?—But thou art but gone before me, my love!

Col. Let me respect the sacred hour of sorrow, nor interrupt it by useless consolation and impertinent form! [*Exit.*

L. Kitty. A short space will unite us, never to bear the torture of separation again! Oh, that it was permitted me, with my own hand to shorten the time! this night, the arched vault should enclose us! to the cold chamber of death I would with rapture descend——

Enter HETTY.

How came that ill-bred puppy let in, without announcing his name?

Het. I fancy, madam, the servants were out of the way.

L. Kitty. That is always the case. Sure never was poor lady pestered by such an infamous set! But you all know and take advantage of my patient and mild disposition.

Het. To be sure, poor dove!—There are some English people below beg to have the honour of seeing your ladyship.

L. Kitty. Do I know them?

Het. Mrs. Clack, of Pall-Mall, with two or three more.

L. Kitty. Let Mrs. Clack first be admitted. Is the room fit to receive them?

Het. Would your ladyship see her in the Chamber of Tears?

L. Kitty. Where else? Light the candles, and shut out the sun! [*Exit* HETTY.]. This part that I play begins to grow horribly tedious. In my husband's lifetime, indeed, I had one consolation, at least, that I could always make him pay me in private for the good humour and fondness that I lavished on him in public: but, now, I have no other resource but in servants; and they, too, at times, are rebellious. These English creatures get such odd notions about liberty into their heads! I fancy, the Turks would make good domestics enough; but, then, the brutes are so tame and submissive that it is scarce possible to teaze and torment them: now, the great pleasure of power is in ruling over sensible subjects, who wince and feel the yoke when it galls them.—Bless me! who is this?—Yes, my lord, in thy tomb all my wishes lie bur—

Enter HETTY.

Het. The room is ready, my lady.

L. Kitty. I wish the room was on fire, and you in the middle on't? plague on you! I was afraid it was the Colonel come back. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

Enter COLONEL CROSBY.

Col. There is a peculiarity in Miss Lydell's distress that I don't quite comprehend; it appears to

arise from a deeper source than Lady Kitty derives it from. I wish I could see her ladyship's woman! The girl seems to have caught a good deal of the manners of her class in this country: curious, arch, and corrupt. With a proper application, there will be no difficulty, I fancy, to get at the family-secrets.—Here she comes.

Enter HETTY.

You are in a prodigious hurry, Mrs. Hetty! Nothing uncommon has happened, I hope?

Het Uncommon! no, no, Colonel; our affairs generally keep pretty much the same train: hurry scurry — sending — recalling — commanding — forbidding—Lord have mercy upon me! To live here, one should have the art of the Holloway-cheese-cake man, and be in a hundred places at the very same time.

Col. She seems in a right cue for my purpose.—You are upon no commission at present?

Het. Not immediately; but I must not be out of the way; for, as my lady is decked out in her dismals, perhaps, she may take a fancy to faint.

Col. Poor lady! Lady Kitty is, indeed, a most extraordinary instance of the sincerity and fervour of conjugal love.

Het. Yes; I believe there are very few women can match her.

Col. And Miss Lydell seems to have caught the infection. How long, pray, has her mother been so exceedingly ill?

Het. Whose mother?

Col. Miss Lydell's.

Het. I never heard a word of her sickness.

Col. No! because my lady was ——

Het. Yes; as I guessed: this is one of her tricks; some story she has trumped up.

Col. Indeed!—Oh, Mrs. Hetty, though it is not usual in this country to give vails, I suppose you know it is the practice to pay some little occasional compliment for the good offices of those whom the injustice of Fortune has placed in a station below us.

Het. I have always said, for politeness, no nation could equal the French.

Col. You will permit me to discharge this duty in part. [*Gives her money.*

Het. One may see by your manner, Colonel, where you have passed the greatest part of your time.

Col. I don't know any body's approbation I am more ambitous to have.—But, Mrs. Hetty, as to Miss Lydell, there seems to be a fixed melancholy hang on her brow.

Het. I do not wonder at it.

Col. But even now, I surprised her in tears.

Het. Like enough. I suppose she has been under the lash; my lady has been, as usual, employing her talents in teazing.

Col. Talents in teazing!

Het. Yes; it is a little amusement her ladyship takes every morning, just by way of exercise, between breakfast and dinner.

Col. Oh, you wrong her ladyship: indeed, I never saw stronger proofs of delicate and tender affection.

Het. Ha, ha, how easily you men are imposed on!

Col. Nay, but my dear girl, prithee, don't be

so giddy. To deal seriously with you, I cannot help taking a warm interest in what relates to Miss Lydell.

Het. Upon my word, she richly deserves it.

Col. And should be sorry to find her present very alarming distress owing to any indiscretion of hers.

Het. On that head, you may make yourself perfectly easy.

Col. But, how shall we be able to account for—

Het. In the most natural way in the world.

Col. Will you be kind enough to lend your assistance?

Het. With all the pleasure in life. You can be secret, I hope.

Col. You will find me a man of honour in every respect.

Het. In one instance, you have just given me a convincing proof, I confess. Why, then, as to this lady of ours; in hypocrisy she would be an over-match for a methodist.

Col. Really!

Het. And, as to cruelty, there never was so ingenious, so refined a tormentor; the fathers of the inquisition themselves would be proud to receive instructions from her. I could give you such a history——

Col. Is it possible!

Het. This room is too public; besides, perhaps, her ladyship may pop in and surprise us, for she is as suspicious and prying as a custom-house-officer. Dare you venture yourself in my room for a moment?

Col. If you are not apprehensive of danger, I must, Miss Hetty, be a coward indeed, if I——

Het. Oh, as to my own part, I know I am secure; you are engaged too deeply elsewhere.

Col. Me, child!

Het. Ha, ha, ha! Lord have mercy! how oddly you look! What! d'ye think, I have not found you out before this? Nay, for the matter of that, my lady knows as much as myself; and, to tell you the truth, I believe that was the cause of the scene to which you were partly a witness.

Col. Nay, but child——

Het. Hush! step into that room: I must introduce Mrs. Clack, the mantua-maker, to an audience; after which, I'll be with you.

[*Exeunt.*

LADY KITTY *discovered in deep Mourning; the Room hung with Black; a Lamp on the Table.*

L. Kitty. What the deuce keeps this woman so long? I grow most terribly tired of my attitude; but to this creature I must keep my character up: she is an absolute gazette, and, at her return, will publish me in every part of the town.

Enter HETTY *and* MRS. CLACK.

Het. There you see her ladyship sits; absorbed in grief; quite absent; she knows nothing of us.

Clack. Poor dear lady!

Het. I will endeavour to rouse her attention.

L. Kitty. Gone! lost, for ever lost!

Het. Please your ladyship! madam!

L. Kitty. Why will you teaze me to sustain a tedious life? I have no relish for rich wines or delicate viands; the bread of affliction is the best banquet for me.

Clack. And that is but coarse food, Heaven knows.

L. Kitty. Don't I hear some other voice in the room? my eyes are grown so misty and dim—

Het. With crying!—Mrs. Clack, your ladyship's mantua-maker, from England, to pay her duty; and desires your ladyship's commands for that country.

L. Kitty. Let her approach.—How d'ye do, Mrs. Clack?—Hetty, child, you may go to your dinner.—A good creature; a humble kind of friend, Mrs. Clack: to her care and attention I think myself deeply indebted; as she will find when they open my will.

Het. For Heaven's sake! your ladyship makes my blood run cold in my veins.

L. Kitty. D'ye think, Hetty, you shall lament me?

Het. Can your ladyship doubt it? I should almost break my heart, if your ladyship was not to leave me a farthing.

L. Kitty. Should you? Kind soul!—I shall try the experiment, you hypocritical slut!

Het. But, when our superiors are so considerate as to think of their menials in their last moments, to be sure, it gives poor servants greater spirits to cry for their loss.

L. Kitty. Doubtless. You may go. [*Exit* HETTY. Well, Mrs. Clack, you find me vastly altered since the death of Sir John.

Clack. To be sure, your ladyship is something changed since the day I had the honour to try on your ladyship's clothes for your ladyship's wedding.

L. Kitty. True. You, I think, Mrs. Clack, decked me out like another Iphigenia, to be sacrificed at the temple of Hymen. Don't you recollect the tremors, the terrors, that invaded each nerve, on that solemn, that awful occasion? You must re-

member, with what reluctance I was dragged by Sir John to the altar.

Clack. To be sure, your ladyship showed a becoming coyness upon the occasion. I remember, about the hour of bedding, you hid yourself behind the bottle-rack in the beer-cellar, to avoid Sir John; if your ladyship had not happened to have coughed, we should not have found you.

L. Kitty. The conflict was great: but, dear Mrs. Clack, what could I do? Troy stood a siege for only ten years; now sixteen were fully accomplished before I was compelled to surrender.

Clack. That was standing out a vast while, to be sure. I recollects what added to your ladyship's grief was, that the nuptials should happen to fall out in the middle of Lent.

L. Kitty. Dear Clack, you renew my confusion: little did I think ever to sully that sacred season by the celebration of such a festivity.

Clack. But there could not be so much harm in the matter neither, as marriages, your ladyship knows, are all settled above.

L. Kitty. By that argument I was induced to surrender; with, however, an express stipulation, that all connubial intercourse should be suspended Wednesdays and Fridays.

Clack. That must have been a vast denial to both parties, no doubt.

L. Kitty. How, Mrs. Clack! you wou'dn't insinuate that I was prompted to the connexion by any——

Clack. Far from it, my lady! I only meant that it must give your ladyship pain to refuse Sir John any favour; for, to be sure, never was any lady half so happy in a partner as you.

L. Kitty. How irreparable, then, must be my

loss! Yes, Clack, he possessed my whole heart, and possesses it still: my waking thoughts are all devoted to him! in sleep, his loved image is ever before me—starting from my couch,

> "I cry aloud; he hears not what I say;
> "I stretch my empty arms; he glides away!"

Clack. Vast mournful, indeed! But I should think your ladyship might find out a cure.

L. Kitty. Which way?

Clack. Fill your empty arms with something substantial, and I warrant, 'twill frighten the phantom.

L. Kitty. Clack, I don't comprehend——

Clack. I only recommends to your ladyship the proscription I made use on myself: there was my first husband, sweet Mr. Snip, though a stay-maker, as portly a person—I really believes I should have followed the dear soul to his grave, hadn't our foreman, Tom Clack, stepped in to console me; indeed, the match was very convenient, as he had done all my husband's business during the time of his sickness.

L. Kitty. I am astonished, woman, at your presumption. Do you recollect to whom you are addressing this language?

Clack. I beg pardon! But I thought in these matters your ladyship was like the rest of our sex; and though Sir John——

L. Kitty. Peace! nor let your unhallowed lips profane the dear name! even now, his sacred shade seems to upbraid me: see there!

Clack. There! where! I sees nothing, I'm sure.

L. Kitty. How awful, how tremendous, he

looks his front furrowed, for the first time, with a frown.

Clack. Lord bless me! I wish I was well out of the house.

L. Kitty. But, be pacified, dear lord of my life; no second to thee shall succeed:—

"First, let the opening earth a passage rend,
And let me through the dark abyss descend,
Before I break the plighted faith I gave!
Thou hadst my vows, and shalt for ever have;
For whom I lov'd on earth, I'll worship in the grave!"

Clack. Never stir, if she ben't talking of poetry! her brain is turned, to be sure.

L. Kitty. He beckons! lead on, my loved lord! thy summons I, with rapture, obey. His arms encircle me round; and now, together, we plunge into the gulph! the raging billows surround us! now they rise o'er our heads! now we sink, we sink, *in silence*, together! and, oh—[*falling.*] Curse the chair, how came I to miss it?

Clack. Mercy upon us! help! for Heaven's sake, help! What, is there nobody left in the house?

Enter HETTY.

Lord, Mrs. Hetty, I am glad you are come! my poor lady! she is quite gone, I am afraid.

Het. On the ground! in one of her fits, I suppose.—No doubt, it is dreadful to you; but we are used to 'em every day. Step and call some more of the——[*Exit* CLACK.] How came your ladyship to fall on the ground?

L. Kitty. Where the deuce have you been? that old fool was so frighted, she never thought of

bringing the chair. She has pinched me as black as a coal.

Het. Would your ladyship please to recover now, or shall I fetch in the hartshorn?

L. Kitty. This woman is an idiot! so there is no occasion at present.

Het. Come back, Mrs. Clack; my lady begins to revive.

Re-enter MRS. CLACK.

and upon these occasions, she wishes to have but few people by. T'other side, Mrs. Clack. So, so, so!

L. Kitty. Am I recalled to hated life again?

Het. Your ladyship has had a violent struggle. Nothing more than usual, I hope, has happened.

Clack. I believes, indeed, it was partly my fault: in order to comfort my lady, I was rash enough to recommend another hus——

L. Kitty. Recal not the detested idea, unless you wish to see me sink again at your feet.

Clack. I beg your ladyship's pardon! I can't think what in the world could possess me! Indeed, Lord Harry Huntwidow, hearing that I was going over, did desire me to deliver a letter.

L. Kitty. To me! presumptuous man! how dared he encourage a hope.—Had not he heard that Don Juan de Mustachio, a Spanish grandee of the very first class, had laid his golden fleece at my feet?

Het. True enough.

L. Kitty. Did not the Palsgrave of Saltsplash, a sovereign prince, on the banks of the Rhine, offer to share his power with me? and, after all, to submit to a subject!—This Lord Harry, Hetty, is an absolute beggar: red-faced, and rabbit-

backed, with a pair of legs like a couple of drumsticks.

Het. Marry come up, my scurvy companion!

Clack. As soon as ever I return, I shall deliver his lordship his letter.

L. Kitty. Hold, Clack, let it lie on the table.

Clack. Will your ladyship deign, then, to give it a reading?

L. Kitty. By no means, Mrs. Clack. Put it amongst the other papers, Hetty, which, in a few days, are to expire in the flames.

Het. It shall, madam.

L. Kitty. A monthly sacrifice I offer up, Mrs. Clack, before the dear image of him I adore.

Het. We shall have a fine blaze; for this month has been very prolific.—My lady's illness had made me like to forget; your relations, Mrs. Clack, grow impatient without.

L. Kitty. Who are they?

Clack. A sister of mine, and her husband, to beg your ladyship's interest to get their daughter out of a convent.

L. Kitty. A convent! how got she there?

Clack. Run away from her parents, with a paltry 'prentice, to avoid the man of their choosing; and purtends, on purpose to plague 'em, that she wants to be a nun; and, what is worser, threatens to turn Papish if they torment her.

L. Kitty. Of what use can I be?

Clack. If your ladyship could order the child to be delivered back to her parents——

L. Kitty. This is a matter of weight, Mrs. Clack, and must be considered maturely: I am too ill, at present, to admit an audience. I shall desire the Governor to direct a guard to escort your niece to my presence; we shall then see

what is best to be done. Hetty, let the Governor know my desire. But this, Mrs. Clack, I must tell you, if the girl's conversion is the matter in question, I can, on no account, interpose; the friendship I have with the Pope ties my hands where the Holy See is concerned.

Clack. Nothing of that, believe me, my lady.

L. Kitty. But do not indulge a surmise, which was circulated, even at Rome itself, with too much success, that any thing sensual tainted the intercourse between the reverend Pontiff and me.

Clack. Heaven forbid that I should think of any such thing!

L. Kitty. Malice, joined with credulity, gave rise to the fable: sacred sentiments, that spring in kindred minds, first began and cemented the union. Every avenue but what friendship permits is guarded by thy loved image, my lord! thou, who art the alphabet, the beginning, the ending, the very great A and Z of all my tender affections. [*Exit.*

Clack. Poor lady! she is in a piteous plight; for all the world, like Mrs. Andromedy, that one sees at the theatre.

Het. Ay, Mrs. Clack; to all widows she is, indeed, a shining example.

Clack. True. Why, I myself, if my husband had left me in circumstances accordingly, should have taken on a great deal more than I did; but folks who have their living to get can't afford to cry, you know, as much as your people of fashion; besides, every body has not the gift of incontinence, like to my lady.

Het. True, true. But you had better step out to your friends, and let them know what measures my lady has taken.

Clack. I will, I will; they will be impatient, no doubt. [*Exit.*

Het. Colonel, you may appear.

Enter COLONEL.

Well, sir, after what you have seen and heard, I suppose all your doubts are removed.

Col. Perfectly satisfied; a new edition of the Ephesian Matron, with amazing improvements. But, poor Miss Lydell! I own her situation distresses me, greatly.

Het. The damsel, it is true, is in terrible durance. Do you feel yourself knight-errant enough to fly to her rescue?

Col. Would the lady, d'ye think, accept of my service?

Het. It is but a poor compliment to suppose that she wou'dn't prefer the soft bondage of love to the galling fetters she wears.

Col. Can I, then, Mrs. Hetty, hope for nothing more than a preference?

Het. I don't think myself at liberty, Colonel, to tell you all that I know. In the drawing-room, you will find the young lady alone. As you gave me a handsome retainer, I have been in court and opened the cause; do you speak to the merits; you are a good pleader, and, I make no doubt, will succeed.

Col. I will go and labour hard for a verdict.

Het. You will find the court inclined to your suit. But, Colonel, you have no objection, when you have delivered the damsel, to break the chains of her confidante too?

Col. The romance would be irregular else.

[*Exit.*

Het. So! her ladyship's power draws towards

a period; she must provide new subjects, at least. She supposed the hopes from her will would secure me; but the day is too distant; besides, I know her too well to place any reliance——

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Bless me, Mrs. Hetty, what can be the matter? Here is a file of musqueteers coming into the house.

Het. The girl, I suppose, from the convent. A new whim of my lady's: I will go to them; you have nothing to fear. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to another Apartment.

Enter MR. *and* MRS. MINNIKIN *and* CODLING.

Mrs. Min. Now, son Codling, boldly put in your claim. We will support you, I warrant.

Enter MRS. CLACK.

Well, sister, what news from my lady?

Clack. Small hopes, I am afraid: the gentlewoman herself is in a desperate taking; but Jenny will be forth-coming, however. I fancy here she is, by the noise on the stairs.

Enter LAPELLE.

Lap. Serviture, Monsieurs and *Mesdames!*—Why, what the *deuce* is the matter? There is your daughter below, surrounded by a troop of *soldas*, as the French call them.—Here she is.

Enter JENNY *and* SOLDIERS.

Mrs. Min. So, Jenny! you see what you have brought yourself to: to be made a show on in the streets, guarded like a——

Jen. I am not the first, madam, who has suffered for the sake of religion.

Mrs. Min. Religion! Rebellion! you hypocritical slut!

Jen. Can I give a stronger proof of my sincerity than in quitting a life of affluence and ease to embrace poverty, fasting, and penance?

Min. Not one of the three but thee would'st run twenty miles to avoid! No, no, Jenny, that's all a pretence; it is not poverty, but something else, you want to embrace.

Lap. Hold, Monsieur Minnikin! You are a little too hasty: *Jeunes filles,* as the French say, are not to be treated so roughly; suffer me to *parle un pew.* Is it true, *madamoiselle, mon amy* Codling, because you are *amoreu* of somebody else——

Jen. My duty, sir, directs me not to contradict what a father affirms.

Min. Yes, yes, you are plaguy dutiful all of a sudden!

Clack. Hush! Here comes my lady; leave the matter to her.

Enter LADY KITTY *and* HETTY.

L. Kitty. Hetty, order the guards to withdraw. [*Exit* SOLDIERS.]—Which are the parties? and what their cause of complaint?

Min. Why, please your ladyship, our business is this: that young slut that stands there, who, between ourselves, for all her sanctified looks——

L. Kitty. Honest friend, you are too familiar and loud.

Lap. Hush, Matt! and let me open the matter.—Matt. Minnikin, my lady, an honest *burgoise,* that lives *dans* the *cité,* won't set fire to the Thames, though he lives near the bridge; a namesake, but no relation to Mr. *Mat-Chavel*—

L. Kitty. You, too, are pretty forward, I think! And, pray, sir, who and what may you be?

Lap. Per vous service, as the French say; my name is Lappelle; by distraction a Frenchman, though a native of *London*; my purdecessors were mefugees, and came over after the revolution of the edict of Nantz. Don't you think, my lady, there is a *quelque chose* in my manner, a something, that speaks me sprung from the French?

L. Kitty. Rather more relative in your modesty, Mr. Lappelle.

Lap. Powteter, my lady.

L. Kitty. But let this honest man tell his own story; he seems very able.

Lap. With all my heart; *de tout mon cur,* as the French say.—Come, Matthew, *alons!*

Min. Why, I say, my lady, as I was saying, that girl there——

Lap. Pardy, asses shenzel; and, for an English face, a pretty jolly visage enough.

L. Kitty. Peace, sir!

Lap. My lady, *pardunn!*

Min. Rather, I say, than marry this honest neighbour of ours, as reputable a trades——

Lap. Cest vrais; Monsieur Codling lives in *beaucope de credit.*

L. Kitty. Nobody called on you as a voucher.

Lap. Assurement, my lady.

Min. She has run away along with our 'prentice; but as we followed pretty close at their heels, not having time to complete their project, she has taken refuge here in a convent; and says, moreover, if we persists, she will promisculously turn Papish and nun.

Lap. Pour a Papish, *powteter;* but *pour la* nun, *pardonnez moi,* my lady, *que dities vous?*

L. Kitty. Will nobody silence this impertinent jackanapes?—Well, child, you hear what your father alleges.

Jen. May I crave your ladyship's private ear for a moment?

L. Kitty. Withdraw; not out of the room.—Well, child, what are the objections to the man your parents have chosen?

Jen. Two as strong ones as any mortal can have: I hate him, and I love another.

L. Kitty. Pretty frank, I must own.—And as to the change of religion——

Jen. A mere fetch, to keep out of their hands.

L. Kitty. You have no hopes that your parents will yield?

Jen. Mother, perhaps, might comply; but no mule is so headstrong as father.

L. Kitty. And you, I suppose, are as determined as he?

Jen. Never once gave up a point in my life.

L. Kitty. I dare say. But, if they were to desire you to marry the 'prentice——

Jen. They would find me a dutiful daughter.

L. Kitty. Then you have no objection to obey their commands when they happen to contain the very things that you wish?

Jen. Not in the least.

L. Kitty. And, after having produced, and at their own expense trained and sustained you, you would still suffer them, I dare say, to support and protect you?

Jen. As in duty they are bound.

L. Kitty. And they might direct you, provided you governed them?

Jen. In every respect.

L. Kitty. Well said, my little American; you

would be a heroine, child, on the other side the Atlantic. Why, in your case, Miss Jenny, I don't see what we can do: there is, indeed, one expedient, if you find you have courage enough to perform it.

Jen. I shall not flinch, my lady, when it comes to the push.

L. Kitty. There are, my dear, two men who solicit your hand; one favoured by you, the other your father approves.

Jen. My situation exactly.

L. Kitty. Suppose, then, by way of reconciling all parties, you were to marry 'em both.

Jen. The happiest thought in the world! I wonder it never came into my head: but I am afraid, my lady, we have not dignity enough to do such a thing as this, without danger.

L. Kitty. We will consider of this at our leisure. How should you like *living with me in this town*?

Jen. Of all things upon earth.

L. Kitty. We will see what can be done.—Mr. and Mrs. Minnikin, I have been sounding your daughter; a little time and some proper persuasions may induce her to comply with your wishes.

Mrs. Min. We are highly indebted to your ladyship's goodness.

L. Kitty. One of my maids of honour is returning to England; I shall have no objection to promoting Mrs. Clack's niece to the place.

Clack. Brother Minnikin!—We shall be bound to pray for your ladyship.

L. Kitty. Here Lydia comes, and the Colonel close with her.

Enter COLONEL *and* LYDIA.

Lydia, my dear, though with the greatest regret,

yet the design is so laudable, I consent that you may return to your mother; these honest people, my love, will conduct you with care.

Col. My Lydia, madam, will not want their assistance.

L. Kitty. Colonel! I don't understand you.

Col. That honour I propose having myself.

L. Kitty. How, Colonel!—Shall I crave a word? I hope you have no bad designs on the girl.

Col. None but such as I hope her friends will approve.

L. Kitty. Is it possible you can be in earnest?

Col. What should make your ladyship doubt it?

L. Kitty. Indeed! Nay, if that be the case, it would be criminal in me to conceal a secret in which your honour is concerned. Those tears, which my humanity made me attribute to her filial fears for her mother, flowed from a more ignoble source.

Col. How, madam!

L. Kitty. A love, perhaps, for one of my menials. How far it proceeded, I shall not take upon me to say; but, to avoid scandal, I found myself obliged to discard him.

Col. Ha! ha! what a happy invention!

L. Kitty. I do not understand you.

Col. Why, to deal with your ladyship plainly, your address is ill employed upon me: I own it consummate; but I have been a concealed witness to some of your arts, and shall hardly be imposed on again. Come, Miss Lydia; you will take leave of her ladyship: her past favours may soon be acknowledged.

L. Kitty. Is this true, Lydia?

Miss L. Your ladyship's approbation, on an

event so honourable and advantageous for me, I make no doubt of obtaining.

L. Kitty. Is it possible that you can quit my protection, and throw yourself into the arms of a renegade?

Col. How, madam!

L. Kitty. Was not your father a rebel?

Col. True, madam.

L. Kitty. And are not you an officer in the service of France?

Col. I was, madam; but my present royal master, who is above the narrow prejudice of punishing the principles of parents in their unfortunate offspring, has accepted my service, and restored my family to the rights of their country. For that spot I shall embark in the morning, leaving your ladyship to lament the loss of a subject to exercise your mischief and malice upon; which, I fancy, you will more heavily miss, notwithstanding your weeds, than the poor knight who was happy, though even by death, to escape from so unfeeling a tyrant!

L. Kitty. Barbarous, inhuman monster! how dare you recal the memory of the dear—had he lived, thus to see me insulted—but that could not have been. Thou wouldst never have borne it, my love!—but I am rightly punished, for suffering even a thought to be diverted from thee!—Hetty, lead to my closet, there to compose my ruffled——

Het. Please your ladyship, I must beg to be excused; I am engaged to take out with Miss Lydell.

L. Kitty. Is it so? well, well! You will follow me with your niece. You see in me, Mrs. Clack, another Darius, deserted, at my utmost need, by those my former bounty fed. But what have I to

do with mankind? all my wishes and wants lie beyond them! I desire no companion but thee:

"Whilst on thy form I fix my eager eyes,
The world I laugh at, and its threats despise." [*Exit.*

Col. The world will be even with your ladyship, or I am greatly mistaken.—Come, my love, it is time to prepare for our voyage.

Lap. You are bound, Colonel, for *Angleterre*, as the French call it?

Col. By the very first ship.

Lap. I wonder that you, who have resided so long in France, can bear the thoughts of living at London.

Col. It is that very circumstance that will give it an additional relish: and believe this, Master Lappelle, as a truth, no man ever yet deserted his country, unless he had previously been by that country deserted.

Lap. Commong can that be? *permitte moi* to laugh, as they say: you see how this town is crouded with *Anglois*.

Col. Too true, I confess; and particularly, Master Lappelle, by those of your business; who, at the same time that they are exclaiming in every paper against the importation of French manufactures, have engrossed almost the whole of that part of the smuggling trade to themselves. I dare say, you are at present furnished with a pretty good cargo.

Lap. To oblige some *my lors*, who are my particular friends, I can't say——

Col. Nay, be cautious how you trust me with your secrets! there may be some danger.—Come, miss; in this house we have nothing further to do.

Miss L. I cannot say but I feel some concern for the young victim Lady Kitty has just got into her power.

Het. You may discard your fears about her: unless I am mistaken, they are very properly matched, and will prove a mutual plague to each other. But, should it be otherwise, there seems to be a kind of dramatic justice in the change of your two situations: you, miss, are rewarded for your patient sufferings, by the protection of a man of honour and virtue; whilst she, rebellious to the mild dictates of parental sway, is subjected to the galling yoke of a capricious and whimsical tyrant!

THE CAPUCHIN;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET:

ALTERED FROM

THE TRIP TO CALAIS.

REMARKS.

After cutting out the character of Lady Kitty Crocodile, this piece, new titled, was licensed and performed in 1776; and, although thus curtailed, was well received. But it reads scarcely second to the original, *Sir Harry Hamper's* debaucheries, and the sectarian *blow-up* between *Viper* and *O'Donnovan*, being the only redeeming novelties for so great a loss; the colloquy between the two latter, in a scene which is full of point, unfolds the scurvy tricks of two low "*literary characters*," so called;—those scum of our *printing-offices*, who, when they turn *rats* in their own trade, become panders of false intelligence; or, as *O'Donnovan* articulates the same idea—doers—death-hunters, murderers. One of these, *Viper*, terminated his career under a sentence of death, which he inflicted by his own hand, at Dublin, late in the century, as the Rev. Mr. *Jackson*,

PROLOGUE.

Written by MR. COLMAN.
Spoken by MR. FOOTE.

CRITICS, whene'er I write, in every scene
Discover meanings that I never mean;
Whatever character I bring to view,
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But every babe his christ'ning owes to you.
"The comic poet's eye," with humorous air,
Glancing from Watling-street to Grosvenor-square,
He bodies forth a light ideal train,
And turns to shape the phantoms of his brain;
Meanwhile, your fancy takes more partial aim,
"And gives to airy nothing a place and name."
A limner once, in want of work, went down
To try his fortune in a country town;
The waggon, loaded with his goods, convey'd
To the same spot his whole dead stock in trade;
Originals and copies—ready made.
To the new painter all the country came;
Lord, lady, doctor, lawyer, 'squire, and dame,
The humble curate, and the curate's wife;
All ask a likeness—taken from the life.
Behold the canvas on the easel stand!
A pallet graced his thumb, and brushes filled his hand;
But, ah! the painter's skill they little knew,
Nor by what curious rules of art he drew.
The waggon-load unpacked, his ancient store
Furnished for each a face drawn long before;
God, dame, or hero of the days of yore.
The Cæsars, with a little alteration,
Were turned into the mayor and corporation;
To represent the rector and the dean,
He added wigs and bands to Prince Eugene!
The ladies, blooming all, derived their faces
From Charles the Second's beauties and the Graces.

Thus done, and circled in a splendid frame,
His works adorned each room, and spread his fame.
The country Men of taste admire and stare,
" My lady's leer! Sir John's majestic air!
" Miss Dimple's languish, too! extremely like!
" And in the style and manner of Vandyke!—
" Oh! this new limner's pictures always strike:
" Old, young, fat, lean, dark, fair, or big or little,
" The very man or woman to a tittle?"
Foote and this limner in some points agree;
And thus, good sirs, you often deal by me;
When, by the royal license and protection,
I show my small academy's collection:
The connoisseur takes out his glass, to pry
Into each picture with a curious eye;
Turns topsy-turvy my whole composition,
And makes mere portraits all my exhibition.
From various forms Apelles Venus drew:
So from the million do I copy you.
"But still, the copy's so exact," you say:
Alas! the same thing happens every day!
How many a modish, well-dressed fop you meet,
Exactly suits his shape in Monmouth-street?
In Yorkshire warehouses and Cranbourn-alley,
'Tis wonderful how shoes and feet will tally!
As honest Crispin understands his trade,
On the true human scale his lasts are made;
The measure of each sex and age to hit,
And every shoe, as if bespoke, will fit.
My warehouse, thus, for Nature's walks, supplies
Shoes for all ranks, and lasts of every size:
Sit still and try 'em, sirs; I long to please you:
How well they fit! I hope you find 'em easy!
If the shoe pinches, swear you cannot bear it;
But, if well made, I wish you health to wear it!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir Harry Hamper	*Mr. Parsons.*
Doctor Viper	*Mr. Palmer.*
O'Donnovan	*Mr. Foote.*
Colonel	*Mr. L'Estrange.*
Mr. Minnikin	*Mr. Edwin.*
Kit Codling	*Mr. Bannister.*
Dick Drugget	*Mr. R. Palmer.*
Tromfort	*Mr. Baddeley.*
La Jeunesse.	
Peter Packthread.	
Kit Cable.	

Postilions, Porters, Shoe-Blacks, &c.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Minnikin	*Miss Sherry.*
Mrs. Clack	*Miss Platt.*
Jenny Minnikin	*Mrs. Jewell.*
Abbess	*Mrs. Love.*
Nun.	

THE CAPUCHIN.

[*In order to avoid swelling the bulk of these works, such passages in* THE CAPUCHIN *as are exactly the same as those in* THE TRIP TO CALAIS *are not reprinted; but the reader is referred to the pages in which the dialogue and fable connect the two dramas.*]

ACT THE FIRST.

[*The first variation from* THE TRIP TO CALAIS, *is by the following insertion, after Tromfort's speech ending* "for he is ver fond of de sea," p. 389.

Trom. Some littel time past, ve vas have anoder gentleman of de same kind in dis town; he vas a *grand* autere; *diable*, a man of great deal of vit, *beaucoup d'esprit*.

Jen. Ay!

Trom. Oh, *oui!* he vas write de pretty paragraph in de gazette, vat you call your newspaper; by gar, he lay about him like *le diable!* Poff, poff, poff! he make all de my lors, ay, and my ladies, too, shake in dere two shoe.

Dick. What brought him here?

Tromf. He vas come over here vid my lady Deborah Dripping.

Jen. Is her ladyship here?

Tromf. No; she vas go to Italy, to visit de Pope.

Dick. And leave the doctor behind?

Tromf. You know he vas Protestant *Pretre;* not but he vas ver polite, and offered to turn Papist to vait on de lady.

Dick. That was very complaisant of the doctor. Where is he now?

Tromf. He is gone governeur to show dis country to a chevalier *Anglois,* an English knight, I dink dey call Sir Harry de Hamper.

[*The dialogue then proceeds, without any variation to* p. 399, *where, instead of the entrance of La Jeunesse, Lappelle, and Gingham, the Act was continued and concluded as follows:*]

Mrs. Min. Bless me, what a rumbling is that!

Re-enter CODLING.

Codl. I fancy, an old neighbour of yours, that has just drove into the yard.

Min. Who can it be?

Codl. Master Hamper, that kept the great tea-shop at the corner of Cornhill; you remember him.

Min. What should ail me? Many a *tiff* have we taken at Mother Red-Cap's, in our Sunday-nights' walks up to Hampstead.

Mrs. Min. Ay, but, Matt. times are altered with him now; since the death of his brother, he is become a knight-banneret, and, perhaps, may choose to forget his old friends.

Min. Ay; ay, like enough. Upon his coming to his means, he grew too proud to live in the

city; so shut up shop, and I ha'n't got sight of him since. Son Codling, dost know what brought him here?

Clack. Sir Harry Hamper! is he here? I shall be happy to see him; I had the honour to furnish him with some tom-bore waistcoats when he set out on his *tower*.

Min. Tower! what a deuce could provoke him to leave home?

Clack. Wanted to see the world, I suppose.

Min. See the world! what, just as he is going out on't?

Clack. And, to qualify him for the honour of a young lady of quality's hand, that lives in our square, to whom he paid his addresses; but she insists upon his polishing a little.

Min. A young lady! what, Harry Hamper! Zounds, why, he is ten years older than I am! on the wrong side of seventy, I'll be upon oath.

Clack. Ay, that is as you reckon him; but he dates his birth from the day of his succeeding to the family honours.

Mrs. Min. About five years ago.

Min. He is not far from the mark; once a man, and twice a child!

Codl. To my thinking, these mounseers have disfigured him strangely; if it had not been for Peter Packthread, his old shopman, whom he keeps as his valet de sham, I should never have known him.

Min. I reckon he is as proud as Old Nick.

Codl. I can't say much as to that. Peter says that his master has not picked up much of their lingo, so his speech is pretty much as it was; he talks to every body, runs from one thing to t'other, and rattles away at his old rate, I can tell you.

Mrs. Min. But how does he manage to call for such things as he wants?

Codl. He picked up a clargyman, as he passed through this town, and carried him with him as his travelling tuterer.—Oh, here he is.

Enter SIR HARRY HAMPER, PETER PACKTHREAD, DR. VIPER, *and two* POSTILIONS.

Sir H. Come, come! come along, doctor! Peter, give the postilions thirty souses a-piece.

Peter. Tis put down they are to have but five in the book.

Sir H. No matter; it will let them know we are somebody, Peter.

Peter. What significations that? ten to one, we shall never see them again.

Sir H. Do as you are bid!

[PETER *pays the* POST.

Peter. There! Pox take 'em, see how they grin! ay, ay, I dare be sworn you ha'n't seen such a sum this many a day.

1*st Post.* *Serviteur! bonne voyage, monsieur* my lor! [*Exeunt* POST.

Sir H. There, there, Peter! my lord! I have purchased a title for ten-pence; that is dog-cheap, or the devil's in't!

Peter. Nay, in that respect, the folks here make but little difference between their dogs and your worship, I think; for every mangy cur I have met with is either *prince*, or *my lord*, or *marquis*.

Clack. I am happy to see your honour in France.

Sir H. What, Mrs. Clack! and Master Minnikin and wife, as I live! How fares it, my old city friends?

Min. Thank you, thank you, Sir Harry! What, you have been the grand tower, I suppose.

Sir H. Ay, Matt, what's money without manners? I have enough of the first, to be sure; and I wanted to see if I could not pick up a little of the last.

Clack. And how does your honour like France?

Sir H. Only the first spot in the world, Mrs. Clack! for eating, drinking, laughing, and loving, *vive la France!* hey, Domine!

Mrs. Min. Eating! sure your honour does not think their wictuals are better than our'n.

Sir H. Wictuals! Lord help your roast-beef and plum-pudding soul! why, there are no such things in the country.

Min. No! I have heard, indeed, they had not over much plenty; but I didn't think the poor creatures were so bad off as that.

Sir H. What! because a whole family does not get round a sirloin of beef, or a saddle of mutton, and devour it like a kennel of hounds! Can there be any thing so savage as to eat up sheep and oxen like a parcel of cannibals. I wonder they don't dress them in their fleece and their hides; hey, Domine!

Viper. Doubtless, Sir Harry; French elegance would never be able to digest such gross animal food, in its natural form; he, therefore, is the best cook with them, who can disguise it the best.

Mrs. Min. Indeed!

Sir H. To be sure. Why, except a side dish of stewed snails, or some fricaseed frogs, I hav'n't known the name of any thing I have tasted since I came over.

Min. Lord have mercy upon us!—And as to love, Sir Harry, I should think that was pretty near over with you.

Sir H. Domine, did you ever hear such a block-

head!—Why, fool, it was my own fault, or I might have gone into keeping.

Min. Into keeping! You!

Sir H. Me! ask Domine only. What was the name of the duchess?

Viper. What signifies naming of one? there was not a day that I did not receive several commissions of a similar nature.

Mrs. Min. Indeed!

Sir H. Domine Viper received the letters, and used to read 'em to me in English.

Viper. They at last became so exceedingly troublesome, that I was obliged to recommend to Sir Harry the entertaining an Opera girl, in order to convince them that they had mistaken their man; and that, so far from receiving, we were able to pay.

Sir H. And so he got me Mademoiselle Mouche, a sweet, lovely syren; and the little rogue was so excessively fond, Domine Viper thinks she will hardly survive my departure.

Min. Wonderful!

Sir H. Fell into 'stericks at my going off in the chay; didn't she? so I left Domine to console her a little; but you found the way to make her easy at last.

Viper. A difficult job.

Sir H. I had some thoughts of carrying her over to England, and taking a box for her at the Opera during the season; but I thought it might give offence in a certain quarter that you know, Mrs. Clack.

Clack. There might have been some danger in that.

Sir H. Otherwise, mademoiselle, the doctor, and I, should have made a sweet *tête-à-tête* on the road.

Min. I reckon she must a' cost you a power of money.

Sir H. Cost! that's always uppermost in a citizen's mouth: not a farthing, you fool! I am sure she would have quitted me if I had but made her the offer. Domine!

Viper. Oh! mere passion; not an idea of interest.

Sir H. Domine heard, indeed, by accident, she had contracted some debts to support her relations, for she is the best creature on earth; and wanted vastly to have a small service of plate, and some ear-rings.

Mrs. Min. Which you gave her, I reckon!

Sir H. Not I: I was obliged to get Domine to manage the business. Had she had the least suspicion of me, there would have been the devil to pay, we should have all been *off* in an instant.

Mrs. Min. The doctor has, I find, been very useful to you, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Could have done nothing without him. Not a week ago, he got me out of a devilish scrape.

Min. How?

Sir H. Got to piquet with a count, a great man of the doctor's acquaintance; I can't say I know much of the game, but what of that? one wou'dn't appear ignorant amongst the French, you know, for the honour of England.

Clack. Oh, fy! by no means.

Sir H. Egod, the count gave me a trimming; lost a devilish deal more than I had in the country; but Domine made it up for me among his acquaintance upon my only giving my note.

Mrs. Min. All one, as if you had been in London.

Sir H. The very same thing.

Clack. And, pray, your honour, what news is stirring in France?

Sir H. Toujours gay, as they say, Mrs. Clack.

Clack. I reckon there be powers of our country folks there.

Sir H. I suppose so; for I saw a good many awkward people, as they say, *a la bowlivards*, and at the Colossus; but I chose to avoid them.

Min. Why so? I should have been ready to leap out of my skin at the sight of a countryman in foreign parts.

Sir H. Like enough, Matthew; but you are a *burgois*, as you know, but the doctor says that *un humm de quality*, when he voyages, ought to shun *les Anglois*.

Clack. I hope you left the royal family all in good health.

Sir H. Yes; Mr. *le Roy*, as the French say, looked pretty jolly and well; I saw him in one of the glass cases at church, and was afterwards at his grand *couvert*, as they call it; his Majesty looked at me very hard: Domine thinks he was struck with my figure.

Viper. I overheard him whisper as much to the Duke de Tremouille.

Clack. How long was your honour coming from Paris?

Sir H. Two days and a night.

Clack. Are the accommodations good on the road?

Sir H. Their *chevauxes*, their horses, as the French call 'em, ar'n't quite so nimble as our'n; but then, to make amends, like the French, I *cowrir* the post without stopping; unless, indeed, to take a slight *repas* of *jambunn*, or a *hamlet*.

Clack. The country's vast pleasant, I reckon.

Sir H. La, la; their country-folks, their *pheasants*, as the French call 'em, don't seem quite so tidy as our'n; but they don't look upon them there creatures in France; mere hogs, *cowshons*, as they say.

Mrs. Min. Why, sure they be Christians, as well as——

Sir H. Christians! why, so may all the world, if they like it; but it a'n't in every body's power to be a gentleman born: hey, Domine Viper!

Viper. True, true, Sir Harry. The laws of subordination are too much neglected in England; all is mere anarchy there; France, it must be owned, is the only spot for a gentleman.

Sir H. True. Why, a gentleman born may kill a common fellow in Paris for less money than it would cost an unqualified man in England to shoot a hare or a partridge.

Viper. Right, baronet: poor rogues are so plenty in Paris there is no danger of "destroying the game."

Sir H. Well said, Domine Viper!—But, Madam Clack, what makes all your family here? Like me, come over to be polished, I reckon.

Min. Not we; we be contented, Sir Harry, to rub on in our rust. You remember our daughter Jenny?

Sir H. Vastly well; and she promised to turn out a devilish fine girl!

Min. Pretty well, as to that.

Sir H. What, I suppose you have brought her here just to fashion her; give her the *gout*.

Min. No, no; 'tis a freak of her own: run away with our 'prentice, to avoid neighbour Codling here.

Sir H. A girl of spirit, however.

Enter LA JEUNESSE.

La Jeu. Monsieur, on a servie.

Sir H. What does he say, Domine Viper?

Viper. The dinner's on the table, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Oh, oh!—Domine, it wou'dn't be decent, as them there people are but tradesfolks, you know, to ask them to dinner?

Viper. Why, yes, you may venture, Sir Harry: it is not minded in London; and this town is little better than an English colony.

Sir H. True, true.—Come, good people; as we are all country-folks, suppose we sit down to table together.

Min. By all manner of means.

Sir H. Domine, you will escort Mrs. Minnikin. Mrs. Clack, will you accept of my *brass?*

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

[*The same in* THE TRIP TO CALAIS, *to* p.414, *where O'Donnovan's speech was altered, and the scene finished, in the following manner:*]

O'Don. So now, as I was a telling, if you can get any friend to speak to the Governor, why, if they take it into their heads to restore her to you, you may chance to have your daughter again.

Min. True, reverend sir. But, before we trouble any body, we will first try what we can do at the convent ourselves.

O'Don. By all mains. And, d'ye hear: you

need not mention any thing about the purse; you understand me?

Clack. Your reverence need not fear us.

O'Don. Nay, it is upon account of yourselves that I speak; because one's charity should be private, you know; therefore, to make publication would take away most of the merit. If you fail, I will step to the convent, and see what can be done.

Mrs. Min. Very kind, reverend sir. Then, we will go after the girl to the convent directly.

Clack. But take care what you say! you see what a hobble we had like to have got into.

Mrs. Min. Never fear; I know how to behave myself. [*Exeunt.*

O'Don. It was an odd freak of St. Francis to forbid us touching of money; unless, indeed, his first followers were a parcel of pickpockets, and he thought of this method to break them [of their tricks.] But, however, as the heretics are gone, and there is no danger of giving offince, by St. Francis's lave, I will examine the contents of this purse. Stay! who have we here? [*Draws back.*

Enter VIPER.

Viper. The wind is veering; and, when it comes fair, my old knight within will be for hieing homewards by the very first ship. Let me see: can I hit on no scheme to give him one little squeeze more? To be sure, what with tailors, *traiteurs*, toymen, the girl, and the gaming-table, my trip to Paris has turned out pretty well. One smart parting blow I should be glad to——

O'Don. Save you, good sir!

Viper. Damn these bare-footed beggars! a set of lazy, lubberly—You may as well shift your ground, father; you will get nothing from me.

O'Don. Be it ever so little! we have nothing but the benevolence of good Christian peo—— Hey! sure it can't be! by my shoul, but it is!—What, Doctor Viper! who expected to see you at Calais?

Viper. Pray, honest friend, when did our acquaintance commence?

O'Don. It is not of very long standing. Come, do shake your memory a bit, doctor, and you will soon recollect me.

Viper. It will be to no purpose.

O'Don. I warrant. Surely, my dear, when you were the doer of the Scandalous Chronicle, was not I death-hunter to the very same paper?

Viper. Hey! why, you can't be Phelim O'Flam!

O'Don. Not now; but I was about twelve months ago.

Viper. What could induce you to turn Capuchin?

O'Don. A few murders.

Viper. Murders!

O'Don. Yes; in order to pay off my lodging, I killed a couple of dozen of people that happened to be alive and in good health; so the printer would employ me no longer.

Viper. I told you, O'Flam, what would happen; why, you became a perfect Drawcansir; put more people to death than any three physicians in London.

O'Don. What then, Doctor Viper? Sure, your poisonous pen did more mischief than me: my dead men walked about afterwards, and did their business as if nothing had happened; whilst the stabs made on peoples' good names, by your rancour and malice, will admit of no consolation.

Viper. How is this?

O'Don. In short, my dear Doctor, the only difference between us is this; my dead men are all alive, and your live men had much better be dead.

Viper. Do you know, sirrah, to whom you are speaking?

O'Don. You may say that; from the top to the bottom, every chink and cranny, my dear.

Viper. Pay, then, proper respect to my cloth.

O'Don. What, d'ye mane is it a priest that you are?

Viper. Without doubt.

O'Don. Then, upon my shoul, it must be of your own ordination, like Mr. Melchizedeck. A priest! I'll wager my frock against the price of a mass, that you can't tell how many the thirty-nine articles are.

Viper. An impudent, audacious——

O'Don. A priest! What, becaase you was parish clerk to the Moravian meeting-house, in the Old Jewry, and used to snuffle out their bawdy hymns to the tune of beastly ballads and jigs! From thence you got expelled for robbing the poors' box——

Viper. Me!

O'Don. Then you became advertisement-sticker to lottery-offices, auctioneers, stage-coaches, and mountebank-doctors; but being detected in selling the bills for waste-paper to grocers, you got your dismissal, you know——

Viper. Rascal, I know!

O'Don. After that, you turned swindler, and got out of gaol by an act for the relief of insolvent debtors.

Viper. Many honest men have been in the same situation.

O'Don. Lave honesty out, if you plaase. Then you became doer of the Scandalous Chronicle; mowed down reputations like muck; pushed yourself into the pay of lady Deborah Dripping, produced anonymous paragraphs against her of your own composition, and got paid by her for not putting them into your paper.

Viper. Where the devil could the fellow collect all this story?

O'Don. Now, from here, I suppose, you will soon return home as a fugitive, and pay your old debts by a new act of parliament.

Viper. Well, but, Mr. O'Flam——

O'Don. O'Donnovan, if you plaase. So, you see, Doctor Viper, you are pretty well known; and all your friends and aquaintance shall soon know you as well as me in this town.

Viper. The devil! well, but, my dear friend, what can be the meaning of this? Why should we two quarrel?

O'Don. Whose fault was it, Doctor, I pray?

Viper. Fault! nobody's fault: I was a little forgetful; that is all. What! we have been connected before, and why shou'dn't we now? ours is a natural alliance; we are poor dogs, and rich men are our game.

O'Don. For the matter of that, I have no objection to hunting in couples.

Viper. That is right. Come, let us in, and drown all animosity in a bottle of Burgundy.

O'Don. I will wait upon you at night; but I have a little bit of business at present.

Viper. Of what kind?

O'Don. To get a girl out of a convent, and restore her to her friends and relations.

Viper. A girl!

O'Don. Ay, the daughter of them there English within.

Viper. Is the girl handsome?

O'Don. I don't know that, but she's young.

Viper. That will go a good way. And fled from her friends?

O'Don. With a lover, they say.

Viper. 'Gad, a thought is just popped into my head, that, I fancy, will yield us both a good deal of profit.

O'Don. Of what kind?

Viper. I will inform you within. But where were you bound?

O'Don. To the convent.

Viper. Suspend your visit awhile. Come with me; I must introduce you to a friend of mine in the house. But I hope this greasy garb has not tainted your mind with any coyness or qualms.

O'Don. Not a bit; it is a convenient dress when one can't get any other: it suits well with the cold winter of distress; but, when the sun and summer of plenty returns, I shall shed my coat, like a colt.

"When the devil was ill, the devil a monk would be,
"When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he."

[*Exeunt.*

[*The scenes at the Convent succeeded, as in* The Trip to Calais; *and the Act ended with no other variation than the following small alteration in Mrs. Clack's speech,* p. 421. *The Third Act was all new.*]

Clack. True, sister. But, come; let us go to THE GOVERNOR, as the friar advised us; perhaps, HE may put us in a way.

ACT THE THIRD.

O'DONNOVAN, SIR HARRY HAMPER, *and* VIPER, *at a Table, with Wine and Glasses.*

Viper. What, then, you know her, Sir Harry?

Sir H. From a child; and a sweet little rose-bud she was! by this time, she is in full bloom, no doubt.

Viper. You seem to express yourself with some ardour and warmth, as if you felt a fancy for this fine delicate flower.

Sir H. Pho, pho! what chance have I to get the possession?

Viper. I don't know that; a little contrivance and the help of a friend have brought more unlikely matters to bear.

Sir H. Why, Domine, if you would lend your assistance, there might be some hopes, I confess.

Viper. Of me, Sir Harry, you are always secure: but in my old friend here, you will find a more able assistant.

O'Don. You are plaased to compliment, dear Doctor Viper. Unless you are greatly falken off, for turning bachelors into husbands, husbands into cuckolds, and maids into mistresses, there was not a better practitioner within the *bills of mortality.*

Viper. My dear monk, a truce to your compliments.

O'Don. Oh, the devil a bit of a compliment!

Viper. Well, well, you are always too kind to your friends; but, upon this occasion, your knowledge of this country——

O'Don. That, indade——

Viper. And; above all, the virtues of that frock will stand us in excellent stead.

O'Don. Why, to say truth, I know but little else it is good for.

Viper. Well, shall we have its assistance?

O'Don. You may say that.

Viper. If this scheme succeeds, knight, it will do you immortal honour in England; your intrigue at Paris was a fine preparation.

Sir H. Do you think that is generally known?

Viper. In the mouth of every mortal.

Sir H. Ay! That is lucky indeed! But how shall we bring this business about?

Viper. Nothing so easy. Flam is, you know, desired by the family, if they cannot succeed themselves, to get the girl out of the convent.

Sir H. True.

Viper. That design is a sufficient pretence for visiting the girl.

Sir H. Cannot be a better.

Viper. As there is little probability that he should prevail with miss to return to her father and mother, let him pretend to have had an interview with the young fellow, her favourite, who lies concealed in the town.

Sir H. Well?

Viper. That, moved to compassion by their tender attachment, he is determined to lend his aid to accomplish his wishes.

O'Don. By this means, a little spill will be gained from that quarter too, [*aside*]—Has she the shiners, d'ye think?

Viper. I warrant she is not come here unprovided. That he is ready to conduct her where her lover lies hid, and lend his ministry to finish the business.

O'Don. I am but a lay-brother, you know.

Viper. Nor I either: but, for all that, I would

not scruple to take together twenty couple a-day.

Sir H. I do not doubt it.

O'Don. That, to be sure, is an answer.

Sir H. But how does all this concern me?

Viper. I was coming to that. When the monk has got possession of miss, what prevents him from bringing the girl to my lodging? where, instead of her swain, she will be agreeably surprised to encounter Sir Harry.

Sir H. It is a very fine plot, to be sure: but, Domine, suppose the young thing should be skittish, and not quite approve of the change?

Viper. We must leave you to settle that business: but, from your dress and address——

O'Don. In trot, she must be more than woman to refuse such a figure.

Viper. A few presents in hand, and vast promises upon returning to England——

Sir H. And you think she will comply.

O'Don. Oh, never heed it; she will melt in a moment.

Viper. Besides, at worst, Flam and I shall be near you; and if a little compulsion should be required——

O'Don. Is it a rape that you main? upon my shoul, Doctor Viper, you are after stepping before me a good daal in mischief.

Viper. A rape! no, no; nothing like it, dear Flam; only a little compulsion, to give the lady an apology for following her own inclinations. Hey, Sir Harry! what are your sentiments upon the occasion?

Sir H. Should like it of all things in the world! I am quite agog till I—How pretty it will be, to see the poor thing pout, and snivel, and sob, and

pat me, and cry, I warrant, 'Go, you naughty thing!"—But is not there some danger? Won't their magistrates, their police, as they call it here, take it amiss?

Viper. Oh, no; a gentleman here does whatever he pleases: besides, it is but a step cross the Channel, and there, you know, we are safe.

Sir H. True, true.

Viper. And, upon second thoughts, let things turn out as they will, I think it will be right, at your time of life, to report it a rape; it will do your vivacity and vigour a good deal of credit.

Sir H. Will it?

Viper. To be sure. A rape! and upon a nun, too! for so we must call her; it will show a noble contempt for decency, religion, and virtue, and cannot fail recommending you to all people of spirit.

Sir H. I should think so. How one improves by one's travels! Why, this would never have come into my head, had I stayed in the city.

Viper. Oh, dear! never; that air is too foggy.

Sir H. I used to be a little fractious now and then; but that! Lord, that's nothing at all!

Viper. Oh, no merit in that; the natural consequence of your food and your fuel.

Sir H. But, you will take care to paragraph me well in the papers; for, if it should not be known, why——

Viper. The main point will be lost. Never fear! in my old paper, I still keep a place open: that no time may be lost, I will send it to-night.

Sir H. I cannot help laughing, to think how my old friends in Portsoken and Dowgate will stare when they comes to the *article*.

Viper. Ready to burst with envy, I warrant!—

Well, O'Flam, you know your part; set off as soon as you please.

O'Don. Upon my shoul, Doctor Viper, there are a few scruples and qualms that begin to rise in my stomach.

Viper. Zounds, man, gulp 'em down, then, as fast as you can!

O'Don. Upon my conscience, they wo'n't go; they stick still in my throat.

Viper. Hark'ee, Flam! Would not a little *aurum portabile*, a small decoction of guineas, remove the obstruction?

O'Don. Why, to daal freely, Doctor, I look upon it there is some small danger in what we are about. Now, as to you two, you are but birds of passage, you know; and, being well winged, can take your flight whenever you plaase.

Viper. Well?

O'Don. Now, as to myself, though I am at home here, yet, for all that, I am but a stranger; and being, besides, as bare as a board, it is but raasonable that Sir Harry should spare me some of his feathers, that may, in case of need, carry me out of gun-shot, you know.

Sir H. By all manner of means.

Viper. But how shall we manage it? The rules of your order are so very severe as to money! I believe I had better receive it; and, if you should want——

O'Don. No, no, Doctor; you are a good casuist, and have silenced most of my scruples: besides, at confession to-morrow, it is but lumping in this with my other transgressions.

Viper. Sir Harry!

Sir H. Oh, by all manner of means; here!

Viper. Throw it into his cowl.

O'Don. No, no; I can conceal it very well in my sleeve. He might have knocked it against the other, perhaps; and that would not have been altogether so decent. [*Aside.*

Viper. Well, well; all obstacles being removed, despatch, my dear Flam, as soon as you can.

O'Don. I sha'n't neglect them. I must go to vespers.—But, Doctor Viper, as you are a conscientious man, and one of the cloth, do not you think, now, that it would be right to have a few prayers put up, for certain persons, who have in agitation some important affairs?

Viper. Why, it may not be amiss.

O'Don. The community, you know, is always considered upon these occasions.

Viper. Oh, I dare say Sir Harry wo'n't scruple.

Sir H. Not in the least. But, to say truth, the reverend father has drawn me dry for the present.

Viper. Oh, you may be soon supplied in the house. Come, I will advance: here, here!

O'Don. And in passing by the trunk, for the poor, if I was to drop in something handsome, you know, it might draw down a blessing upon our design.

Sir H. Domine, give him the whole purse!

O'Don. I shall have great pleasure in serving so pious a man. Save you, gentlemen! [*Exit.*

Sir H. A shrewd sensible fellow this O'Flam, let me tell you.

Viper. Yes, yes; he knows what he's about.

Sir H. But, Domine, after the business is finished, how shall we dispose of the girl?

Viper. Restore her to her friends, and make it a merit.

Sir H. But if she should turn out coy, and complain of ill usage?

Viper. We must impute it to spite, as, by your means, she is deprived of her lover.

Sir H. That, indeed—But will they believe it?

Viper. Believe it! 'Flam and I will swear to the fact.

Sir H. That, indeed—But who have we here?

Enter MR. *and* MRS. MINNIKIN, *and* MRS. CLACK.

Oh, Mrs. Clack! what success have you had?

Clack. Came away just as we went; the young jade whines about fasting and penance like a methodist preacher; and talks of embracing poverty, as if she was a peer of the realm.

Min. She poverty! 'tis all a pretence! it is somebody else she wants to embrace.

Sir H. Why, Domine and I have been laying our noddles together.

Clack. Your worship is wonderfully kind.

Viper. Sir Harry has employed a priest here in this town; perhaps you have seen him?

Mrs. Min. D'ye mean his reverence, with the long beard?

Viper. The same. The friar is just despatched to the convent; and as the great point is to get the girl out of their clutches, he is to persuade her that she is to be conducted directly to Drugget.

Mrs. Min. But, instead of that, he is to bring her to us?

Viper. No, no; that would be too abrupt! to Sir Harry Hamper; who, as a friend to the family, will teach her her duty, and what she owes to her friends.

Clack. That will be very kind in his honour.

Sir H. I shall spare no means, Mrs. Clack, to make her submit.

Mrs. Min. But I hope his honour wo'n't push things to extremities; for you know, Matthew, she still is our child.

Min. Extremities! Sir Harry has undertaken a more difficult task than he is aware of: the young slut is so headstrong and fractious, that my old friend will find it out of his power, if she continues obstinate, to make her comply.

Sir H. Well, well; it is but trying, however.

Viper. You will take care to be in the house if we should want you. Come, Sir Harry, we must hie home, to wait for the monk.

[*Exeunt* SIR HARRY *and* VIPER.

Clack. Come, good folks, who can tell but his honour may 'compass this job?

Min. I can't say I have any great expectations. My old friend, when he lived amongst us, was never over-famous for his powers of persuasion: and I can hardly think that age has improved his abilities. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—The Street.

Enter DICK DRUGGET.

Dick. It is impossible for me to quit this town, and leave my dearest Jenny behind me; there my heart's treasure lies hid, and there, spite of myself, I am carried by an irresistible impulse. To see her, I suppose, is impossible; and equally difficult to give or receive any intelligence. Hush! I must hide.—Hey! no, sure! yes; it is Jenny herself! but who the deuce can it be that conducts her?

Enter O'DONNOVAN *and* JENNY.

O'Don. The house is hard-by, at the other end of the town; and stands alone, between the inn and the snuff-shop.

Jen. Your goodness, my dear father, to a poor unfortunate victim I want words to acknowledge. Your self-denial and mortified state place you above the reach of any pecuniary——

O'Don. My sweet pretty cratur! in acts of charity, indade, to folks poorer than we are, if any such can be found, we are always plaased to convey any donations.

Jen. I shall think myself happy to assist so pious a purpose. [*Feels for her purse.*]—Bless me! is not that my dear Dicky, who stands there at the corner?

O'Don. Dear Dicky! who the divil is he?

Jen. The very youth to whom you were going to convey me.

O'Don. Pho, pho! how can that be? becaase why, I left him at home; and how can he be in two places at once? unless, indade, he had wings.

Jen. His impatience, I suppose, made him follow you hither.

O'Don. Pox take his impatience! But I tell you, Miss, it cant't be; becaase why, I never saw that parson before.

Jen. But I have, and, therefore, can't doubt; I must run to him, father; for I know it is he.

O'Don. Is it? Then, my best way is to run from him as fast as I can. [*Exit.*

Jen. Dicky!

Dick. My dearest Jenny! this is an expected pleasure indeed. But who was that with you?

Jen. The honest father you sent to conduct me.

Dick. Me! I have neither seen nor spoke to a soul.

Jen. No!

Dick. No. This is some plot of your parents, to get you into their clutches.

Jen. Perhaps so. But where can we go? Have you secured no retreat?

Dick. How could I, my love? as I hadn't the smallest hopes of—But here comes the priest again, and somebody with him; let us turn down this street, and avoid him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter O'DONNOVAN *and* VIPER.

O'Don. There, there they go.

Viper. I see, I see. A fine girl, as I live! too nice a tid-bit for an apprentice, or my musty old knight: I'll try if I can't secure her myself.—O'Flam! you know Bet. Bonnet, the milliner's girl, that lived with me in London!

O'Don. You may say that.

Viper. When I went with the knight, I left her in my lodgings in town; step to her this instant.

O'Don. Well?

Viper. Explain to her the business of Hamper: convey her to him as Minnikin's daughter; she knows well enough how to assume the airs of a novice.—But there is hardly time to instruct her. Ten to one, too, this blockhead will make some damned blunder or other.—O'Flam!

O'Don. Well?

Viper. Upon second thoughts, you had best undertake this business yourself.

O'Don. What d'ye main?

Viper. Pass yourself on the knight as the party.

O'Don. What, me, for old Minniki's daughter?

Viper. Ay.

O'Don. Oh, lave off! I shall be aasily taken for a lovely lass, to be sure.

Viper. Why not? he must be in the dark, to execute his own intentions, you know.

O'Don. That is true. But how shall I hide my voice? he may see that, you know, without the help of a candle: besides, I am told I have a small twist in my tongue.

Viper. Oh, as to that, Hamper is no critic in dialects; besides, say little, and soften your tones as much as you can.

O'Don. But if he should turn out too familiar, what will I do then, Doctor Viper?

Viper. It will be easy enough to repel any violence from a man of his age. Besides, I will think of some expedient to bring you speedy relief.

O'Don. Well! well! upon my shoul, after all, there is a good daal of fun in the fancy.

Viper. You are to take him for Drugget, you know.

O'Don. No bad match for my linsey-woolsey.

Viper. Oh, a truce to your wit now, and despatch, I beseech you.

O'Don. I go, I go. [*Exit.*

Viper. They are either housed, or must return back again; this is no thoroughfare. Oh, here they come.

Enter DICK *and* JENNY.

I am glad I have met with you. Come, come! I hav'n't a moment to lose.

Jen. and Dick. Sir!

Viper. That rascally priest is gone for the guard; you will have a file of musqueteers here in a minute.

Dick. What have I done?

Viper. Done! don't you know, that to steal a girl from a convent in this country is a capital crime?

Dick. Sir, as I hope for mercy, I am innocent.

Viper. Innocent! besides, a priest to accuse you! wo'n't they find you together? Is not that proof enough of your guilt? In a word, I know your whole story; I pity, and am ready to serve you.

Jen. Good sir, what can we do?

Viper. You hav'n't a moment to lose: run to the port, throw yourself into the first vessel you see, and make for England as fast as you can.

Dick. And what must become of Miss Jenny?

Viper. Leave her to my care; I am well known in this town, and can conceal her with ease.

Jen. But, sir, how—who——

Viper. Oh, child, be under no apprehensions; my motive is solely compassion; besides, my cloth is a sufficient security.

Dick. Cloth! perhaps the gentleman is a clergyman——

Viper. Hush! that must not be known where we are.

Jen. On that sacred character I can safely rely.

Viper. We lose time! a truce to your regrets and your raptures; I will soon bring you together, I warrant. That way leads to the quay. Come, miss; it is but a step to my house.

Jen. This wonderful escape I owe to your goodness.

Viper. I could do no less, as a Christian.

[*Exeunt.*

A Chamber darkened.

SIR HARRY HAMPER *alone.*

Sir H. Miss will soon be here, I suppose. Well, after all, for improving the mind, and removing foolish prejudices, there is no country like France. No wonder our young folks of fashion turn out such fine fellows, ecod!—Here she is, I believe. No.—A lad, who comes over here at nineteen or twenty, may well pick up all the pretty accomplishments, when I, at seventy, in less than three months, have learnt to game, whore, despise my own country, laugh at religion, and, as far as inclination will go, am ripe and ready for any frolic or fun. Well said, old Harry! After all this, my young mistress in London cannot refuse me, I think; the devil's in her, if I hav'n't done enough to convince her that I have scoured off all the sneaking sniveling cit, and am as profligate as if I had been born a——Hush! the door opens.

Enter O'DONNOVAN.

O'Don. Sir Harry!

Sir H. Well?

O'Don. Are you sure you are there?

Sir H. Without doubt.

O'Don. And alone?

Sir H. Yes.

O'Don. And no light?

Sir H. Don't you see?.

O'Don. I didn't know but you might have a candle concealed.

Sir H. Where, in my pocket?

O'Don. Come, miss, you may enter. [*Exit.*

Jen. [*within.*] Hands off, you rude ruffian!

Sir H. What the deuce noise are they making?

Jen. [*within.*] What, are they all dead in the house? no creature to lend me assistance?

Sir H. What can this mean?

Jen. [*within.*] Or have you all conspired to betray me? For Heaven's sake, some Christian body——

Mrs. Min. [*within.*] It is my daughter's voice. Here, house!

Min. [*within.*] Zounds, break down the door.

Mrs. Min. Which room are they in?

Min. The noise came from this.

Enter MR. *and* MRS. MINNIKIN, MRS. CLACK, COLONEL, O'DONNOVAN, *and* CODLING.

Min. Have you seen any thing of my daughter, Sir Harry?

Sir H. Your daughter!

Jen. [*within.*] Unhand me! This door, too, is locked. What, will no mortal come to me?

Mrs. Min. There she is.

Min. Let me come. [*Breaks open the door.*

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Protect me, save me——

Mrs. Min. It is her. Look up, Jenny! don't you know us, my child?

Jen. My mother? Oh, ma'am!

Mrs. Min. Recover your fright; you are now out of danger. What has been the matter, my love?

Jen. The greatest villain, the greatest monster!

Min. Who? what?

Jen. First got me into his power, by the pretented sanctity of his character——

Min. Well!

Jen. Finding his delusive offers rejected, proceeded to violence, when my cries brought you to my aid.

Min. This is some *parle vou* rascal! they don't mind a rape or a robbery here.

Mrs. Min. Not they; *Lord send us safe* [illegible] *to* Old England, say I.

Min. Come out here! let us have a peep at your mugs, mounseer, if you please. [*Pulls out* VIPER.] Hey! who the devil—— Why, this is Sir Harry's Domine Viper!

Omnes. Sure enough.

Min. His tutorer, as sure as a gun! But who the deuce is, he, Sir Harry?

Sir H. Heaven knows! I picked him up here in this town.

Mrs. Min. Some vagaboning feller, I warrant.

Min. The rascal won't make a reply. Come, friend! who and what are you?

Viper. What right have you to inquire?

Min. Your villanous attack on my daughter

ives me a right; and, before we part, I will now.

Viper. Will you? Then ask it of those that will tell you.

Min. What, can nobody——

Clack. Perhaps his reverence here may; for he seems to know most of the folks in the town.

O'Don. Me! I know nobody out of the convent.—I believe I had better shaar off; for, perhaps, by-and-by, they may take it into their heads to make some inquiries after me of myself; and, for the present, it will be more convanient to drop the acquaintance. [*Exit.*

Min. But, what the deuce, can nobody give us an account who he is? Where's landlord?

Col. You seem all strangers to this honest gentleman.

Min. Oh, this perhaps, is somebody who belongs to the town. Why, sir, if you could give us some information——

Col. Nay, I cannot boast the honour of his acquaintance, nor, from the account of his countrymen, should I be very ambitious to make it.

Min. Ay, like enough; and pray, sir, who—

Col. The various particulars of his history would be rather too tedious at present; but thus far I may venture to say; his residence here is not a mere matter of choice.

Viper. Is the preferring the genial climate of France to the fogs of your favourite isle any great matter of wonder? In short, I like neither your country nor people.

Col. For which you have, doubtless, very good reasons; but believe this as a truth, Master Viper, no man ever yet deserted his country, unless he had been first by his country deserted.

Viper. You are very partial, Colonel (for I know you), considering England is a spot to which you can never lay any claim.

Col. Why not?

Viper. Was'n't your father a rebel?

Col. True.

Viper. And are not you an officer in the service of France?

Col. I was; but my present royal master, above the narrow prejudice of punishing the principles of parents in their unfortunate offspring, has accepted my service, and restored my family to the right of their country.

Clack. Well said!

Sir H. Ay, and well done, too! to reclaim by clemency, is the noblest victory a monarch can gain over his subjects.

Min. But what can we do with this fellow? Is there no method of punishing such a——

Col. Let him alone; a gentleman of his particular turn cannot long escape the prying eyes of the police in this town; and, I promise you, they shall not want a key to his character.

Sir H. But, colonel, I begin to suspect that I, too, have been bit by this Viper; couldn't I stop him, just to make him account for——

Viper. Stop me! you had best take care of yourself. You forget a few obligations of yours I have in my pocket; which, as I find you are quitting this country, I shall endeavour to get better secured. [*Exit.*

Sir H. Now, there is a rascal!

Col. How came you to place any confidence in a man without the smallest recommendation?

Sir H. Lord, who could suppose that a countryman would impose upon——

Col. Your countrymen, Sir Harry, are the very last people, unless they are well known, you should trust or cherish in France.

Sir H. And why so?

Col. The necessity they lie under of shifting their quarters is, with too many of them, their only reason for crossing the Channel.

Min. Indeed!

Col. And I will venture to say that, without the concurrence of some of these gentry, no considerable fraud has ever been committed upon our young giddy travellers in this part of the world.

Codl. Vast curus, indeed! that shall go into my journal. "Obserwation — The French, who rob and cheat the British subjects in Paris are all of them English."

Mrs. Min. Ay, ay; all birds of a feather. Let us go home and leave them, as fast as we can. Well, Jenny, I hope there is an end of all thy vagaries — thee seest what *premunirers* thy wilfulness had near brought us into.

Clack. Nay, sister, don't press the girl, for the present. Let Mr. Codling continue his courtship; and, in time, I warrant, the girl will comply.

Codl. Why, father-in-law, that was to have been, it seems to me, and to say truth, from the samples I have had, before I settles, I should like to see a little more of the world.

Min. Nay, Master Codling, you may do as you list; nobody wants to compel you.

Mrs. Min. For the matter of that, if Dick Drugget's friends are inclined, they are well to pass in the world; and who can tell, in the end, but one match may be as good as the other?

Codl. Why, as they are so vast fond of each other, I think it is the best step you can take.

For my part, I have made up my mind: I'll pa with my shop, voyage round the world for the re of my life, and, like other great travellers, com municate my observations, for the good of my country.

THE END.

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